TERCENTENARY EDITION

LIFE OF ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

EDITED BY
REV. J. F. X. O'CONOR, S.J.

Eugene Gordon

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LIFE OF

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA,

OF THE

SOCIETY OF JESUS.

EDITED BY

REV. J. F. X. O'CONOR, S. J.

WRITTEN BY

THE STUDENTS OF RHETORIC, CLASS OF '92,

OF

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE,

NEW YORK CITY.

TERCENTENARY LIFE.

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THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS DEDICATED TO THE
YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN
OF AMERICA,
AS A SHORT REMEMBRANCE
OF THAT DEAR FRIEND OF GOD
THE PURE, THE BEAUTIFUL, THE HOLY
ST. ALOYSIUS,
WHO, LIKE US
LIVING ON THIS EARTH,
HAS, BY HIS BEAUTIFUL LIFE
AND THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS VIRTUES,
TAUGHT US
THAT WE, TOO, WITH THE HELP OF THE GOD
WHO LOVES US,
CAN KEEP FROM SIN
AND, EVEN AMID THE WHIRL OF EVIL AROUND US,
CAN LIVE HOLY LIVES
AND WIN THE BLESSED CROWN OF ETERNAL JOY
WHICH GOD PROMISES
TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE,
Easter, 1891.

St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

By F. Maracelli. From a painting at Rome.

TO ST. ALOYSIUS.

O ALOYSIUS, to whose loving care
Has been intrusted all our youthful life,
O, list, dear brother, to our humble prayer,
And lend thine aid to help us in the strife.
How swift the passing of thine earthly days,
Yet in their light, what lessons may we learn!
The ways of God, and truth, and light to praise,
The ways of darkness and of sin to spurn.
What honors now with other saints of God
In radiant glory does thy soul possess?
In all, brave boy-saint, hast thou glorious stood,
High on the summit of great holiness.
For who of those with whom thou now dost dwell
Hath e'er excelled thy matchless purity?
Or who performed the Lord's behest as well
As thou, with unassumed humility?
Too holy wert thou for the tainted earth
Which could not hope to long imprison thee;
Too soon, 'twould seem, still pure as at thy birth,
Thy soul has entered immortality.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE Tercentenary of the birthday in heaven of St. Aloysius.

What is the meaning of a centenary and a tercentenary? The Romans of old celebrated the building of the city of Rome, not only with annual rejoicings, but every hundredth year with the Secular Games, the "Ludi sæculares." "Within the circle of a hundred years the life of man is bound," said the poet, and speaking of these games, Ovid says, they are "to be looked upon once in a lifetime." The solemn voice of the herald proclaims that invited guests have either never beheld them before, or never will again.

Eight hundred years before the Romans, the people of Israel held their feast of joy, their jubilee, corre-

sponding to the feast of games of the Romans, not every hundred, but every fifty years. It was a day of freedom, a day of remission of punishment, a day of gladness and jubilation.

In Christian times, the Jubilee was celebrated every hundredth year, in the time of Boniface; every fiftieth year, by order of Clement VI.; every thirty-third year, in honor of the years of Christ's life, by Urban VI.; and every twenty-five years, by a decree of Sixtus IV.

Three hundred years St. Aloysius has lived in glory; young, yet venerable; for, not declining and fading years make old age, not gray hair and wrinkled visage, but wisdom. He was, if you measure years, a young man, but if you weigh the greatness of his life, he had reached the summit of old age.

This Tercentenary honors, therefore, the three hundred years of his heavenly glory, and this volume tells how that glory was merited.

The present edition, prepared especially for the Tercentenary Celebration of the feast of St. Aloysius in

America, hopes to offer to American readers a more attractive life of St. Aloysius than those at present existing in English.

What will give added interest is that this life was written by a number of young students, all under the age of nineteen, the members of the Class of Rhetoric of '92, of the College of St. Francis Xavier, New York City.

This life of St. Aloysius is not a translation of any work, but the material has been taken from the best sources. The authors have drawn largely on that rich mine of ascetic treasures, the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists, and have culled there the original, newest and best material at first hand. They have taken all that was interesting from the old life of Fr. Cepari, first written in Italian, translated into poor French, and translated from the French into English, and reprinted with an American preface.

They have also taken what was best and most interesting from the recent edition for the centennial, by

Fr. Charles Clair, published in 1891, and secured since their own work was taken in hand.

They claim, therefore, that no effort was spared to present to their contemporaries, the young men and young women of America, a good life of St. Aloysius, written especially for them by American college students, whose hope is that this work will be a tribute worthy of the saint in whose honor it was written, and bring both to writers and readers a better knowledge of St. Aloysius, a greater love for and imitation of his beautiful life, and a stronger claim to his powerful intercession with God.

Whatever may be the perfection of the Life, it was a noble and beautiful purpose, that of a band of young men, striving by their efforts to make better known the life of a hero of the Church of God, and the special "Patron of Youth."

EASTER, 1891.

AUTHORS' PREFACE.

THIS June 1891 we celebrate the Tercentenary of the feast of St. Aloysius. The Church intends to make it a grand occasion—an occasion on which she will offer up a pleasing remembrance to God, to His heavenly court, and especially to the dear young saint, who has merited so great and so lasting an honor, and thus to inspire, to elevate us poor struggling and it may be straggling followers who are trying to tread the path of virtue.

Rome will put on her holiday attire, and everything will harmonize with the solemnity of the celebration. St. Peter's will ring with the praises of St. Aloysius; prayers and thanksgivings will ascend from the altars; grand and solemn ceremonies will announce

that it is a festival of more than ordinary moment within the realm of the Church.

All over the world it will be looked upon as a great day in the religious calendar.

But why all this splendor and ceremony? Has a mighty general died? No! Has a learned philosopher or theologian passed away? No! Has a great orator or any of the lights of the world gone to his eternal rest? No, none of these. Has a great hero died? Ah, yes! And that hero was but a young man.

Short was his life, but how sweet! how good! how noble! A few years of struggle and sanctity, and all was over for him.

Did I say over? Not over, but just begun. For while his bones are whitening with the decay of years, his name and deeds have spread and spread until they have reached the limits of the earth. But even that is not all, for while time is, his work is not finished and will not cease until the gates of eternity have closed, never to reopen.

But ere the sun has run its course, all this pomp and celebration will have passed away. The memory of that day may live in the hearts of a few, but to the vast throng it will be as if it never had been.

A few words in Aloysius' honor, written in that faithful and almost immortal ledger of mankind, books, however unpretending they may be, remain for posterity. They live when even the faintest recollections of that grand celebration shall have sunk into oblivion.

Wishing, therefore, to do something in honor of him who is especially bound to us students by the patron's tie, but at the same time knowing our inability to do anything worthy of his sacred memory in the eyes of the world, we have undertaken a task, small it may be, but still a task, by which we hope to make the world know him better, and knowing him, the better to honor and love him.

We do not claim for this little book any great merit or distinction, but have written it in the hope of saying a word that will interest our own contemporaries,

of comforting the loneliness and melancholy of a weary hour in the room of the convalescent; in the hope of brightening the dark hours of those in sadness and adversity; of offering a solace to the sorrowful and a pleasure to the fortunate, and, in a word, of guiding and strengthening youth and gladdening old age.

But if this little memento accomplish nothing else but bring one or two souls a little nearer to God than before, by a knowledge of Aloysius' noble example, and teach them to venerate and cherish a saint who parted with friends, power, wealth and home to merit the kingdom of heaven, and whose whole life was a perpetual vow of chastity and a work of penance, we feel that our feeble efforts have been amply repaid, and our fondest hopes will be more than realized.

But whatever be the fate of our little work, whether it meet with an early death and be soon forgotten, or whether it pass down the corridors of time with the name of Aloysius, we lay it at his feet as a tribute of

love, and let its readers ever remember that it was written by a class of students in honor of the grand celebration of the tercentenary of a saint, whose life has been the guide and model of their youth, and whose holy memory they hope to cherish in their old age.

"*Exegimus monumentum ære perennius.*"

"We have erected a monument more lasting than brass."

F. X. S.

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RHETORIC CLASS OF '92, ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE,
NEW YORK CITY.

EASTER, 1891.

ST. ALOYSIUS.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE.

IN the beautiful world of supernatural grace, the saints of God have traced by their lives, a dim outline of the glory of heaven. The perfections of God, so varied and so limitless in their infinite beauty, can never be adequately represented by any finite creature or any number of creatures, howsoever perfect each may be in itself.

Yet, just as each single star, gleaming through the darkness sends a bright ray to cheer our world, telling us its message of the glory of the creator of the firmament, so the life of each saint, beaming through

the dark sinfulness of a corrupted world, reveals the divine beauty of the supernatural life. Such a brightness was the short, sweet life of Aloysius Gonzaga.

Like a dream, comes over our memory the vision of that favored child of God, beautiful in the spotless whiteness of his innocence, joining the purple passion flower of penance to the lily of his sinlessness.

As we recall the two characteristics of his life, innocence and penance, the contrast with the days in which we live is deepened. Innocence seems to flee away with the first unfolding of the youthful intellect, and the self-indulgent spirit of the times, the softness of fashionable ease, the costliness of modern surroundings, the insidious claims of culture and refinement, with the worship of wealth and ambition, almost brand penance as a folly, or, at least, as something needless and out of joint with the spirit of the day.

Worldliness, pleasure, selfishness is eating away the hearts of the young. The world's demands are so crowding about their thoughts as to shut completely out the

view of the real supernatural world of glory that is waiting for man when this world's little drama of time is over.

And yet, are there not young souls to save now as ever—souls to be transformed into saints? to be miracles of innocence in the midst of sin, and wonders of abnegation in the rush of unchecked indulgence? Aloysius can show us what may be done by the young man who understands the value of innocence and the utility of penance. The reality of his life enkindles new faith, makes hope strong and brings a new enthusiasm to charity.

It has been said that saints are often made by reading saints' lives. We know of St. Ignatius that one of the first motives of his new life was the holy ambition that came to him on reading the lives of St. Francis and St. Dominic. He said: "What St. Francis has done I shall do. What St. Dominic has done I shall do." And from that moment Ignatius began the life-work of a saint. May we not hope that something of such a grace may come with the reading of the life of Aloysius, or, at

least, that we may be led to thank God for placing before us the beauty of such a complete young life? His story may be told briefly and simply, for it is not the beauty of words and language that brings home to the heart the sanctity of a life, but the understanding of the earnest spirit with which he ever served God.

The life of a saint is nearer to us than the lives of other men. We know that if we are to gain the laurel of an eternal crown our heroism must be like his, and when we see that he who has become great in holiness had his trials and struggles to reach that end, it encourages us to aim at a higher life.

The youth whose life claims the admiration of all who love what is good and beautiful belonged to the princely family of the Gonzagas. His father was Ferdinand Gonzaga, an Italian noble, who, at the period when our story begins, was residing in the court of King Philip of Spain.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century, King Philip II, of Spain, was at the height of his power. His

name was one of the most honored, his fame widespread, and his court one of the gayest. After the death of his wife, Mary Tudor, Queen of England, he married Isabella, daughter of Henry II, of France. On her departure from her native land, Isabella brought with her, as maid of honor, her intimate companion, Martha de Santena, who was descended from a noble family.

Martha's father was the Baron of Santena, Lord of Chieri, and the ruler of several independent fiefs; her mother was Anna della Rovere, daughter of the Duke of Urbino. Closely connected with the royal household of France, Martha, from her childhood, was the constant friend of Isabella. In Spain this friendship continued, and often when the Queen was troubled in spirit she would seek her faithful friend, confide in her, and find comfort from Martha's sympathetic soul.

The latter's noble character, her deep affection, her tender nature, her innocence, her prudence were always sources of guidance and consolation. Such was she who was to be the mother of St. Aloysius, one who united

in herself all the qualities of a faithful friend, the virtues of a noble and a holy woman.

In the year 1566, the visit of the King's nephews, the Archdukes Rudolph and Ernest, of Austria, was the occasion of great festivity. In their train came many German and Italian nobles, who helped to make old Madrid more than ever a scene of royal pageantry. Among the most honored was Ferdinand Gonzaga, the Marquis of Castiglione. He was a man then past middle age. All his life had been spent in the camp and amid the dangers of war; and yet, among the frivolities of court-life, among the dangers of the field, he always preserved the spirit of a Catholic. A soldier among soldiers, always ready for battle, ever ready to fight for his country and his faith, he loved, perhaps to excess, glory and honor. Sprung from one of the noblest families of Italy he was respected and honored at court. In all, he was a chivalrous knight of the age; such a one as we might picture Ignatius of Loyola, before the siege of Pampeluna.

It was on this occasion then, at the court of Madrid, that Ferdinand Gonzaga first met Martha de Santena. He learned to appreciate her character and to admire her piety. The camps, the glory of a soldier's life, faded from his vision as he gazed upon her in admiration.

One who has found a long-sought treasure can scarcely conceal his joy; his face beams with gladness; his heart throbs with happiness. With such feelings did Gonzaga gaze upon the bright and beautiful flower that attracted him in the court of Philip.

He had met many a maiden in his travels in Spain and Italy who gladly would have consented to be the bride of the princely soldier, but not until now did Ferdinand meet his ideal of beauty, nobility and piety. But this gem was not to be easily obtained.

Determined to seek her in marriage, he made known his purpose to the King and Queen. In one of those pleasant hours which the Queen often spent with her friend, Isabella tenderly expressed her wish that Martha should become the wife of Ferdinand Gonzaga.

At first the maiden hesitated. She was still very young; he had already passed the meridian of life; she was retired and humble, caring little for a worldly life; he found his whole pleasure in the world and in seeking glory and fame.

But to please the Queen, Martha was willing to consider her wish. She frequently prayed, consulted her confessor; and finally, after long communication with her own soul, she agreed to become the wife of the Marquis of Castiglione.

After the preparations were made, the wedding was celebrated with all the pomp and rejoicing of a brilliant court. Surrounded by the brightest social lights of Europe, by chivalrous knights and noble ladies, in the presence of the king and queen, Ferdinand Gonzaga and Martha de Santena were married. And yet all this splendor did not hide from the eyes of the happy pair their duty to God. On the day of the wedding they prepared by the reception of Holy communion. And while in that earthly court ladies smiled and nobles

congratulated, there was One in the highest, the court of heaven itself, Who looked down upon that happy scene and saw fit to bless that union with His special graces.

Soon after the wedding, the marquis with his wife returned to his home at Castiglione. Here Martha, freed from the cares of court life, continued and even increased her pious devotions. Her constant prayer was that she might have a son who would be entirely devoted to the service of God. The marquis, too, hoped for a son, but not for the same purpose as his wife. As from childhood he had been accustomed to the life of a soldier, and had sought glory for the name of Gonzaga even on the battlefield, so he wished a son who would keep that name in honor before the world.

On the ninth of March, 1568, at this happy home, Aloysius was born; a child destined to be one of the greatest saints that the world has ever known. Scarcely had he come into this world when the stain of original sin was removed by baptism, and from that time

onward his soul was as clear as the cloudless summer sky, as free from any stain as the newly fallen snow.

He blossomed forth as beautiful as a flower under the sunshine of a mother's love. Like Elizabeth, the mother of St. Bernard, Martha devoted all her care to teaching and directing her son. And Aloysius was certainly blessed in having such a mother, for no one has more power to form a noble character than a good and holy mother.

Her gentle voice calms and soothes him, teaches him tenderness, moulds him to goodness; for as the most delicate touch of the sculptor's chisel or of the painter's brush helps to delineate the features which the artist wishes to represent, so each touch, each word, each glance of the mother helps to mould and form the disposition, and to influence the character, of her child. This Martha de Santena knew, and she endeavored to teach him, above all things, piety and the love of God. Every day she made the sign of the cross with the infant's hand, she repeated again and again the names of

Our Lord and of His Blessed Mother until at last her heart throbbed with joy when she saw the lips part and utter the words "Jesus," "Mary."

It seems that these two names tell the whole life of St. Aloysius. He imitated Our Lord not only in innocence, but as far as possible in suffering; and from the time of his birth he was under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and mirrored her purity and love for God.

As soon as he was able to speak distinctly, his mother taught Aloysius to say the Our Father and Hail Mary. From the time our saint first began to say these prayers, he loved to go apart and pray; for even at this early age, when he did not know the meaning of the words he uttered, he would hide in some corner and there repeat the two prayers his mother had taught him.

But the marquis did not like this training for Aloysius. Such education, he thought, would not fit him to be a soldier. An opportunity offered itself for the marquis to place him in a more martial atmosphere.

The infidels were about to wage war on Tunis, one of Philip's African provinces, and the king gave Gonzaga the command of three thousand soldiers, then in training at Casal. Overjoyed to be once more called to fight for his God and his king the marquis prepared to set out on his journey.

He determined to take Aloysius with him, hoping that the surroundings of the camp would give a different turn to the boy's fancies. His mother was loath to allow him to go, especially as he was but four years of age. But the marquis would not yield, and so Aloysius, arrayed in complete armor, started with his father for the camp. As may be supposed the warlike surroundings kindled in the boy's breast a spirit of courage. To make his life at camp still further attractive the marquis allowed his son to carry a small flask of powder and a miniature musket. Aloysius took great pleasure in loading and firing his tiny weapon, and in the review gained admiration by his clever imitation of the soldiers.

But the privilege of carrying powder was taken from him on account of an accident. Once, while loading his piece, all the powder he had about him exploded in his face. Providentially he escaped any serious harm, as he was but slightly burned; but this incident caused the marquis to be more cautious in regard to his son.

For some time Aloysius considered himself disgraced on account of the unskillful use of his ammunition, and one day he determined to redeem his reputation.

While the soldiers in camp were taking their usual after-dinner nap, Aloysius quietly crept among them and opening one of the men's cartridge-boxes took out a charge of powder. He scampered with his prize back to the castle and there loaded and fired a field-piece, barely escaping death from its recoil. In a moment the whole camp was in confusion. It must be something unusual that causes a cannon to be fired at such an hour! The marquis cannot understand it and fears it may be the signal for a mutiny. He prepares to

punish the offenders; but what is his surprise and delight when he learns that Aloysius had fired the cannon for his own amusement. Still he would not let the misdemeanor pass unnoticed, and threatened to punish the boy, but the soldiers secured his pardon.

A short time after this incident, as the marquis set sail for Tunis, Aloysius was sent home to Castiglione. On the journey homeward his tutor heard Aloysius using some oaths which he had learned from the soldiers in camp.

Roaming at will among the men he naturally heard words scarcely fitted for his ears, and without having the slightest knowledge of their meaning, he repeated them.

But what was his grief on learning that they were wrong. He wept tears of bitter sorrow and ever afterwards in life he considered this fault enough to make him suffer the harshest penances.

What a lesson in the sorrow of this little child for his unconscious offence! We, who struggle along the

weary road over rough stones and opposing snares, often alas falling, rising but to fall again as we continue our journey, can we not behold in this picture of a saint, of a child weeping for such a fault, can we not see there what true contrition is? Certainly this fault of Aloysius was very trivial. But if it appear at the most a little fault to us, to Aloysius it seemed a very grave one.

When Aloysius arrived home, after the first fond greetings of his mother, he began to tell of his misdoings and escapes at the camp.

She not only thanked God herself, but told Aloysius that he should thank Him and the Blessed Virgin for his escape from danger. We may rightly suppose that God had a special object in preserving this child from death, both in the two incidents already narrated and in his miraculous escape afterwards from fire.

God had chosen him as the brightest gem among the nobility of Europe. He had chosen him to ascend from earth to live in the region of Heaven. As the eagle in

his flight soars on high and gazes steadily upon the sun, so Aloysius, with the aid of God, was to rise above the throngs about him, to ascend before the light of Heaven. The bright rays of innocence and humility were to rest upon him, the fire of true love was to burn within his heart; the spirit of Jesus Himself was to animate his soul.

For a few years after his return, since the marquis was engaged in the war at Tunis, Aloysius was left alone with his mother.

Can we not imagine how every morning, as the sunlight gleamed through the window, this happy mother would call Aloysius to her knee and teach him some new prayer, some new precept, speak to him of God and of the love of the Blessed Virgin? And can we not see, too, that face of the little saint gazing into his mother's eyes, angelic with reverence, earnest with the pure attention of a loving child? Can we not see those features gleam with joy, as he learns some new truth of the God he loves.

And when we dwell upon this scene, are we not irresistibly carried back to those days of Nazareth, where, under the guidance of the Blessed Virgin, it is told that "the Child grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom and of grace before God and before men?"

The war at Tunis and his duties as chamberlain detained the marquis from home for two years, and at the end of that period he returned once more to his family.

He found the idol of his heart a model of wisdom and sanctity, but he was far from pleased, for the martial bearing which he had taken so much trouble to develop had entirely disappeared. However, he did not despair, for another opportunity of taking the saint from his mother offered itself. A terrible plague was raging in Italy, and on its approach to Castiglione the Gonzagas fled to Monteferrato. Here the health of the marquis began to fail, and his physicians ordered him to the baths at Lucca.

He repaired to that place, taking with him his two sons, whom he intended to leave at Florence, at that time a great educational centre.

The mother of Aloysius was deeply distressed when her children were removed from her watchful care, and she begged the little saint to guide his brother Ralph, who was apt to fall into danger on account of his love for the world. Aloysius, after promising to take good care of his brother, set out for his destination with a heavy heart, for he knew that he would be surrounded by many trials.

On his arrival at Florence the young prince was received with great pomp; all the nobles were anxious to welcome him, but the pious boy, then only nine years old, shunned pleasure and sought union with God in prayer. It was at Florence that he made his first confession, and so overcome with grief was he at the thought of ever having offended God, that he fainted at his confessor's feet.

The advice which the good priest gave the young

saint was not lost, for it increased his humility, and he behaved with such self-abasement in the presence of the servants, that on several occasions they were obliged to remonstrate with him.

He guarded his tongue with the greatest diligence, seldom speaking to the members of his own household, for he knew that by keeping a watch over his words many sins would be avoided.

The remembrance of Florence was ever afterward sweet to him, for it was here that he took the first decisive step to renounce the world; it was here also that he made a vow of perpetual chastity.

After leaving Florence, while at Mantua, he was attacked by a disease which necessitated a constant abstinence, and even when cured he refused to give up his meagre diet. His friends vainly begged him; his answer was invariably the same, that such a course had proven beneficial to his soul.

At Mantua he shunned all society, never leaving the house except to attend mass or visit his uncle.

As Aloysius' desire for a religious life became more and more ardent every day, and as he had resolved to relinquish all claim to title and inheritance, as a preliminary step he begged exemption from attendance at court.

His father thinking that this might be due to ill-health, sent him to Castiglione for a change of air. Here he was received with great joy by his mother, who noticed that his rosy complexion had disappeared. But there was an air of sanctity about the child far more pleasing to her. However, she thought it her duty to try to dissuade him from his severe fasts. She resorted to every means, but arguments and entreaties were alike vain, for although Aloysius listened with respect he was unwilling to desist from the practice of penance.

He cultivated every opportunity of growing in holiness, and rejoiced greatly when he was taught to contemplate the Divine Mysteries and to meditate on the truths of Redemption. This meditation was productive

of good results, for it tended to strengthen his union with God by raising his mind and soul far above the things of this earth. He spent a great part of the day in devotions, seldom changing his position, and so fervent was he that he was frequently found prostrate before the crucifix, pouring forth tears of repentance for his slightest imperfections. It mattered little to him whether he was on the street or in his room, his life was filled with the spirit of prayer.

But it must not be thought that the saint's only occupation was prayer, for he found leisure to perform numerous charitable deeds. He devoted his time to teaching, not only children, but also grown people who clustered about him and listened with the greatest respect and attention to his explanations of the catechism.

The next important step in the life of Aloysius was his first communion, for which he was prepared by St. Charles Borromeo, who was at that time in Castiglione. The holy child made the acquaintance of the

venerable prelate, to whom he laid bare his whole soul. St. Charles wondered that one so young should have reached such a degree of perfection, and he instructed the youth to begin his preparations for first communion.

Aloysius prepared his soul by prayer and penance for the day which he accounted one of the happiest of his life.

The memorable event was indeed one of exceeding joy to him, and it must have been gratifying to St. Charles to give the Blessed Sacrament to one whom he knew must be very pleasing to his Lord.

So great was his fervor that at every mass which he heard, he burst into tears at the consecration, and did not cease weeping until the mass was over.

In fact, from this day forth there was a marked change in the life of St. Aloysius, every action bore testimony to the love for Jesus Christ which he had learned in his first holy communion. His confessions were models of humility, care and contrition, and they

filled with admiration the priest who had the happiness of being his spiritual adviser.

A short time after Aloysius had received first communion, the family was summoned to Casal by the marquis, and the journey thither almost proved fatal to the young saint.

In crossing a turbulent stream the horses became detached from the carriage, which was tossed about to the great danger of its occupants. The dangerous position in which Aloysius was placed did not seem to disturb him in the least, and he remained as if unconscious, quietly praying until rescued.

This fortunate escape made the meeting with his father all the more affectionate. But when the marquis gazed on the pallid countenance of his saintly child, he could not refrain from rebuking him for his rigorous mode of living. His reproaches, however, although listened to with the greatest humility and respect, did not change the penitential spirit of Aloysius.

His aspirations were always a subject of annoyance to his father, who determined to allure him from the thought of a religious life by worldly diversions; accordingly he sought to make him join in the games with the other princes. But it was all to no purpose. He sent him to Milan to be present at a pageant, in which all the nobles of the surrounding provinces were to participate. Aloysius respected his father's wishes by accepting a prominent position among the nobles, but saw little of it all. His heart was with God, he could not find time for such pleasure.

However, he was not without some recreation, for oftentimes he engaged in discussion with the monks of the neighborhood, and perhaps it was partly due to this that he now resolved to embrace the religious state.

When he had made this final decision, he began to live in a spirit of penance as a religious. He did not allow a fire to be kindled in his room even on the coldest nights. In consequence, his hands became

so inflamed and swollen from the severe cold as to excite great pity on the part of others, but the little sufferer would take no remedy to relieve his pains.

Notwithstanding this and the other severe penances referred to, the holy youth imposed on himself additional mortifications, which reduced him to a mere skeleton, and rendered his life one of constant torture.

His family remonstrated with him, but he felt the inspiration to become a great saint by interior and exterior penance, and how faithfully he carried out his project can be seen in the rest of his life.

His prayers, which were very numerous, were not interrupted by the most severe illness, and on one occasion his ardor nearly cost him his life.

One night, overcome by extreme weakness, and desiring to continue his devotions, he threw himself on his bed and placed a lighted candle at his side. But he had taxed his strength too much, and very soon he fell into a sound sleep, from which he was awakened by intense heat. The candle had set fire to his bed.

When he arose, flames darted from the burning bed in every direction.

Aloysius never ceased to feel gratitude to God for his preservation from such a terrible death. And he was more grateful because it was not the first time that his Lord had visibly preserved him from dangers of soul and body.

In giving thanks for his preservation, he did not know of the glorious end which God had in store for him, or that his life had been saved because his Maker wished him to live as a model of virtue for the youth of all time. Humility, with a nobleness of spirit beyond conception, modesty and purity fostered as the most precious ornaments of the soul, contempt for wealth and honor, all combined to make him pleasing in the eyes of God and worthy of the love, admiration and imitation of men. And holy though his boyhood was, his youth was not less admirable for its sanctity.

Chapter II.

HIS PURITY AND PENANCE.

AMONG the many qualities which so eminently fitted Aloysius to be the patron of youth, was the purity for which he was so conspicuous throughout his whole life.

Great though his other virtues were, that may be said to have outshone them all; and were all his other saintly qualities lost sight of, this one alone would suffice to obtain for him that love and veneration with which the Church to-day regards him. Even in his earliest childhood, long before the use of reason, he gave promise of reaching that perfection of innocence which can be likened only to that which the angels possess. And in

his later life, when surrounded by all that was calculated to divert his mind to worldly things, he never once lost that baptismal purity which has made him so attractive to the young.

This was not only because he was fortified against such temptations by grace, but also because he recognized the beauty and loveliness of innocence, because he knew its delicacy and frailty, and the ease with which its lustre could be dimmed.

So blameless was his life, that words would fail to do justice to the subject. The first years of his childhood were well calculated to plant in his heart the germs of that holiness which blossomed afterwards into so fair a flower. He enjoyed the devoted care of a mother whose dearest wish was to see her son consecrated wholly to God's service, and the child's innocence and natural meekness of character served to increase her expectations.

She knew that the impressions longest retained, are those which have been made in early childhood; that

the habits formed then are always remembered, and influence the whole after-life.

On every occasion she instilled into his mind some holy precept, and her admonitions fell upon good ground. Her child was unusually bright, and his mother found it an easy task to correct his faults and to inculcate pious and virtuous sentiments. Aloysius responded to all his mother's endeavors, and even at a very early age exhibited extraordinary holiness and desire of a perfect life.

The rough manners of the camp and the temptations of the court could not sully with any great stain, that innocent soul which she had moulded to God's service.

The incident of the camp that has been alluded to in the first chapter shows how deep-rooted were the lessons his mother had implanted in his heart, and how far, even at the age of four, he had advanced in steadfast holiness. For trifling though this circumstance was in itself, it exercised an important influence upon the young saint's after-life.

He considered his offense as almost unpardonable, and although, taking into consideration his youthfulness and the fact that he was wholly unconscious of any wrong-doing, we might suppose a slight penance would make ample atonement for such a venial sin, Aloysius took no such view of the matter.

He made it the sin of his life-time, and even the rigorous penances and constant mortifications which he afterwards practiced, did not seem sufficient to atone for this offense. Be that as it may, it certainly led to beneficial results.

His life in the world was such as to elicit the admiration of all with whom he associated. He placed a guard upon his lips, and to such an extreme did he carry his modesty that it is related he never looked upon the face of a woman.

Nor was Aloysius satisfied with being innocent himself; he made and kept others so. Such was his horror of sin, especially the sin of impurity, that the uttering of an immodest word by others would

cause a blush to mantle his cheeks and make him seek relief from his feelings of sorrow at the offense to God, in copious bursts of tears.

We have other manifestations of the innocence of the heart of St. Aloysius in his life at the court of Spain. There he was beset with all worldly temptations, but they served only to make him recognize his helplessness and entire dependence upon God.

It seemed as if the devil had no power against him, for he kept his spotless robe of innocence unsullied until his death. It was no wonder that St. Charles Borromeo rejoiced that it should be his fortune to give the Bread of Life to one whose innocence had already declared him to be a saint. He was the theme of conversation among all who knew him in the world, and their admiration for his holiness was unbounded, as later in the novitiate he was the source of edification, not only to those who were preparing with him for the priesthood, but to the priests themselves, many of whom were already eminent for their sanctity.

Truly, there could be no better model proposed to youth for imitation than St. Aloysius. Joined with that perfect innocence, we find in St. Aloysius an amazing love of penance. Perhaps, in some other saints, there was some grievous sin that induced them to mortify themselves, but, as we have seen, the life of Aloysius was spotless. There was no very urgent necessity for him to practice mortification, and it was his pure love for God that sought to express itself in this manner.

Many would consider it wrong to torture the body when one has never grievously offended God, but St. Aloysius did not look at it in this light. He knew the temptations of the world and of the flesh, and he sought the best means to combat them. He knew also that man's worst enemy is himself, and he practiced mortification to subdue himself, that the body might not enslave the soul.

He pictured to himself the Saviour's life on earth, His sufferings, His passion, His crucifixion, and he

wished to testify his love for God by imitating Him. He thought of the martyrs dying nobly for their faith and rejoicing in their afflictions, and he desired to share their glory in heaven by experiencing some of their sufferings on earth. The body is a reminder of the world, and it was Aloysius' desire to sever his connection with the world. And thus it acquired for him many graces and procured for him a greater reward. It made his life the holier and his memory the more revered.

And his spirit of penance as well as his innocence has fitted him to be the patron of youth—a model well worthy of imitation in teaching self-restraint, a contempt for a life of softness and ease, and not only a willingness, but an eagerness to suffer if necessary, to avoid sin.

Throughout the preceding pages, in reviewing the many virtues which so eminently distinguish Aloysius as a model of innocence and purity, none of his heavenly gifts impress us more forcibly than this rigor

of his mortification. Ever faithful in the performance of the many stringent obligations which he voluntarily imposed upon himself, he was not the less so in the practice of mortifying his body.

And so rigorously did he, throughout his whole life, adhere to this practice that we do not hesitate to say that his love, at all times most pure and sincere, was doubly so in his meditation on the Divine Passion of our Lord.

With a heart susceptible as it was to the miseries and wants of others, he was never more sensitive than in contemplating the bitter trials that marked our Lord's Passion. Never did Aloysius seek for recreation, even at that age when youth most demands it; but while his companions were enjoying their youthful games he would retire to some quiet corner, where he might be unobserved, and there, with childlike delight, he would meditate on the Divine mysteries.

So proficient did Aloysius become in meditation, in that form of mental prayer, which, above all others, is the source of sanctity, that his whole being was

transformed, and he seemed to enjoy the vision of the angels.

In man, the highest virtue is his love for his Maker, God, and although this love asserts itself, as it necessarily must, in various ways, yet none is more essential than self-denial, as is evident from the lives of the Saints, and not the least from that of St. Aloysius.

Men seem to shrink and tremble beneath the slightest bodily sufferings, rarely viewing them in a Christian spirit, or looking upon them as warnings, perhaps, from God. We may look for examples of heroism worthy of imitation in deeds of illustrious men, but nowhere shall we find a more perfect, a more profitable example for the imitation of youth, than in the eagerness of Aloysius to find the will of God by perfect self-denial.

From his early childhood Aloysius evinced a great desire to deny himself the many comforts and pleasures which his father's house afforded, fearing that in indulging in such vanities he would be estranging himself

from God. When Aloysius received his first communion, his love for God increased still more, and with it his mortification.

The love of Aloysius towards Christ in his Passion, inflamed him to manifest it in a way that might be pleasing and acceptable to God, and no better means did he find than by imitating the sufferings of Christ daily, bearing in his body "the marks of the Passion of Christ." Every day of his life increased his mortification: when at home he was always seeking new means of mortifying his flesh, and when abroad he carried about with him some instrument of mortification.

Viewing the life of St. Aloysius by his mortification alone, we have a model of consummate perfection for the young, to whom he has left examples of innocence and purity. From every act of his whole life we may draw a practical lesson, for who can behold one so innocent, practicing such rigorous penances, and not be moved to venerate such hatred of sin, and to exclaim with Aloysius himself: "Would that I could

love God with the fervor which His Infinite Majesty deserves! My heart weeps because Christians show such ingratitude towards Him."

We must ever keep in mind the tender age of Aloysius to fully appreciate the almost incredible heroism of his penances. If an older man were to seek such sufferings, we would then believe that he saw the worthlessness of life, that he had become convinced of the great blessings continually being heaped upon him, or was impelled by the remembrance of his transgressions and the desire to atone for them. This, indeed, would be a praiseworthy act. But how far more glorious, how far more sublime is it in a young man, a prince, to inflict upon his sinless body sufferings deserved only by the most guilty sinner!

We are told that when in adoration of his suffering Master, with his eyes fixed on the picture of the crucifixion, his hands would remain clasped before him and raised on high, his frail body quivering, trembling with emotion, his lips parted, and from his eyes, tears of

love would flow. When he looked upon that picture, all that Jesus suffered came before him and so pained him that he could not keep back the tears. When he compared his own life with that of his Saviour's, he would feel appalled at the contrast, and fall into a swoon. To kneel before this picture was a daily duty of sorrowful love. No day passed without his asking His Lord to make intercession with the Father, to give him the joy of understanding His sufferings, and of becoming better acquainted with His divine Heart.

For days and days he refused to take proper nourishment. He delighted to live on a scanty allowance of bread and water, and would partake of no other food except when compelled to do so. He never knew what comfort of body was, finding more than a counterbalance of solace in his peace of soul. So earnest was his interpretation of what he thought penance to be, that he would allow no obstacle to hinder him ; nothing, no matter with what sufferings of body it was accompanied, could lead him astray from the performance of it.

The Church has given many saints to her divine spouse, each one remarkable for some distinctive trait in which he approached more nearly to the Saint of Saints, Jesus Christ. In one we admire the most ardent charity, in another we are awed by the love of poverty; this one shows us the burning zeal of the apostle, that other opens to us the depths of humility to which a soul may be urged by the love of God. In our young Saint Aloysius we are amazed at the compendium of virtues that his short life presents. We behold with wonder a purity and an innocence that turned in horror from the slightest stain of sin; a humility that made him thirst with an insatiable longing for every kind of abasement in the eyes of the world; a charity, that according to the testimony of Our Lord Himself, could not have reached a higher degree of perfection, since he laid down his life for his fellow-creatures; finally a spirit of mortification, a love of suffering so great that we shall scarcely find greater in the annals of God's saints.

In the first part of the present chapter, having admired his innocence and love for penance, we shall consider now how complete this penance was.

This attraction for mortification he displayed at a very early age. When scarcely eleven years old, while living at Mantua, his doctors had counseled him to be very abstemious in his diet. To obey them he practiced an abstinence so rigorous that it is a matter of great surprise that he could live. Did he eat a whole egg, which rarely happened, he considered that he had made a hearty meal. He continued this austere fast, not only during the winter which he passed at Mantua, but also during the entire summer at Castiglione, though the doctors and others about him dissuaded him from carrying his abstinence to such lengths.

He was moved to this life no longer on account of his health, as was the general impression, but out of a spirit of devotion, as he afterwards told his Confessor, Fr. Jerome Piatti. The malady from which he had suffered disappeared effectually under this treatment, but he

injured his stomach, so that he was unable to take or retain any food. He had previously been quite stout, but now he grew very emaciated, so that in spite of a naturally vigorous constitution he suffered from extreme languor. But little did he care for this in view of the great advantage that his soul derived from this course of life. Moreover, it gave him an excuse for avoiding the amusements at which his position at Court would otherwise have obliged him to assist.

His father took him to live with him at Casal, at that time the seat of the Governors of Monteferrato. Seldom would he go out to see the pompous ceremonies that frequently took place in the city, and when circumstances obliged him to go, he would take some out-of-the-way seat, keeping his eyes cast down while his soul held intimate communion with God.

The marquis returned to Castiglione with his family. Aloysius there continued his usual practices of penance and devotion, and even increased them, so that it is a matter of much surprise that he did not contract

some serious illness, or that his parents, who were witnesses of his life, did not forcibly put a stop to such austerities.

Besides the severe abstinence which he had adopted at Mantua, he imposed on himself many fasts—on Saturday, in honor of the Blessed Virgin; on Friday, in memory of the Passion of Our Saviour; and on Wednesday, because it was a usual fast day at that time. Still other extraordinary fasts were observed according to the festivals of the church and the inspirations of his piety.

So little did he eat, that some persons at court, among them Camilla Ferrari, wondering how he could live, determined to weigh the food he habitually took at a meal. These persons testified under oath, that what he ate did not amount to one ounce. This was evidently much less than could be required to satisfy the wants of his body, and one is inclined to believe that God Himself undertook to sustain his life by miracle, as He did for other saints.

He would choose at table from among the dishes placed before him those which he relished least, and after having tasted them he would put them aside.

But the rigorous penances hitherto narrated formed only a portion of his austerities. At least three times a week he scourged himself to blood, and as he approached the end of his life in the world he scourged himself in this way every day, and often three times during the night. At first, not having a discipline, he made one for himself out of the dog-leashes that he found about the house, and it is said that he also made use of an iron chain. His servants often saw him kneeling in his room scourging his innocent body until the blood flowed to the ground.

The marquis on learning these things severely reproached Aloysius, and speaking to the marchioness declared that "the child seemed to wish to kill himself."

Frequently, as he retired to rest, he would wear near his body a piece of rough hair-cloth, and put a block of

wood in his bed to mortify himself even as to sleep. So great was his hatred of his body that he made a cincture of the rowels of spurs, whose sharp points penetrated into his delicate flesh, causing most keen suffering.

How great must have been his zeal to advance, when thus, at the age of about thirteen years, he found means, in the midst of the pleasures of Court, to treat his body with such rigor.

He found in prayer and meditation a new source of mortification. Each morning, on rising, he passed an hour in prayer, and at night, before retiring to rest, he spent one or two hours on his knees in holy converse with his God.

His father was often grieved because he could not induce him to leave his room, and he often declared to Fr. Malavolta that he had frequently found the floor wet with tears at the place where Aloysius had been kneeling.

Still, Aloysius during the day did not find enough time to satisfy his desire for prayer, and often during

the night would he rise, and in the gloom and darkness spend hours in long and profound contemplation. He prayed thus on his knees and without support of any kind. This practice he kept up not only during the summer, but during the cold winter nights, so that at times his body was penetrated by the cold, and shivering and weak he would fall prostrate to the ground and there continue to pray. He himself declared afterwards, in Religion, that he was frequently so overcome by cold and weakness that he was unable to move a limb.

His efforts to overcome all distractions in prayer were such as to bring on a violent headache that remained with him for the rest of his life. Far from complaining or seeking any remedy, he rejoiced to have a continual reminder of the passion of his Saviour, as long as it did not prevent him from performing his ordinary exercises.

He would frequently pass the entire day in the church or in his room, without saying a word to

anyone. Indeed, he afterward declared that he spoke more in one day as a religious, than he had during an entire month while in the world, and added that were he to return to his family he would be obliged to change his mode of life in this respect lest he should scandalize those who had formerly known him; and yet there was no more faithful observer of silence in religion than Aloysius.

Of course it would be madness for everyone to endeavor to imitate the saint in this respect. It was only the special leading of the Holy Ghost that brought him by such unusual ways. But this chapter of his life is a divine lesson "writ large," that the ideal man, especially the ideal young man, is one who will be pure at any price.

Among the mortifications which Aloysius practiced in the world should be enumerated the extreme watchfulness which he maintained over his eyes and his tongue. Never was he known to criticise others, even in the most trifling matters; his words were measured

so that no idle, useless language ever fell from his lips. As he realized that the eyes are the windows of the soul and that sin may there enter into the heart, he was most careful never to look upon anything that could cause him to offend God.

In literal imitation of the Prophet who said, "I have made a compact with my eyes that they should never look upon the face of a woman," Aloysius, while a page in the court of Spain, never looked in the face of the Empress Anne of Austria, though the duties of his office brought him into her presence every day.

He loved to wear old garments, patched and threadbare, such as the poorest person would disdain to use. When, by the marquis's order a new suit was made for him, he delayed putting it on as long as he could, and then he wore it only a few times to put it aside for his old one.

Never did he wear the golden necklace and other ornaments that were usually worn by the Spanish

nobles. These he called worldly vanities, and declared that he served God and not the world.

This repugnance which he showed for the things of the world caused him to be severely reprimanded by his father, who, at first, could not tolerate such conduct, imagining that it brought dishonor on his house. Finally, however, overcome by his son's constancy, he was led to admire in him what he had not the strength to approve.

It was due to his mortifications that he obtained from his father permission to enter Religion. After having vainly besought the marquis to allow him to follow his vocation, he retired to his room and kneeling down, wept bitter tears, and begged of God the strength to bear with this trial and to change his father's heart. Knowing the efficacy of suffering in prayer, he took his discipline and beat himself unmercifully, so that the blood flowed to the ground. The marquis, feeling that he had spoken harshly to his son in the interview he had just had with him, sent the governor of the castle

to him. The governor came to the room of the saint and looking through an opening, beheld Aloysius as we have described him. Touched with pity at the sight, he returned to the marquis with tears in his eyes, and said: "If your Excellency could see what your son is doing, you would not hesitate longer to allow him to enter Religion."

Ferdinand asked him what he had seen and why he wept. "My Lord," said the Governor, "I have seen your son in such a condition that no one who looked upon him could restrain his tears."

The next day at the same hour, the Marquis, at that time confined to his room by the gout, had himself carried to the room-door of Aloysius, and there beheld him preparing to scourge himself again. At this sight he was filled with consternation, and for some moments was unable to utter a word, then he ordered his attendant to make some noise at the door and to knock. He entered with the marchioness, and beheld the floor stained with blood. This overcame

him and he granted the permission so long desired and so earnestly prayed for.

It was a year, however, before his father could be prevailed upon to fulfill his promise of allowing him to leave the world, and during those last months Aloysius so multiplied his austerities that he could scarcely stand on his feet. It is certain that he overstepped all bounds of prudence in the excess of his fervor.

His mother made use of this as a reason for urging her husband to allow him to carry out his design, declaring that if he continued to withhold his permission they would undoubtedly lose their child, whose life could not long sustain such constant and severe hardship. She added that were he in Religion the vigilance of his superiors would moderate his ardor by thorough obedience. This, indeed happened, and Aloysius himself admitted that the charity of his superiors in putting a restraint on his indiscreet fervor had proved no less salutary to his bodily health than profitable to his soul.

Finally, on the 25th of November, 1585, Aloysius

came to Rome, and at the feet of Father Claudius Aquaviva made a complete offering of himself to God. He had often heard his father say that he that begins a work or undertakes a duty, should apply himself with his whole soul to perform it well. "If we may hold this principle in things of the world," said Aloysius, "how much more reason for holding it in things that regard God!"

All his conduct shows how faithful he was to this principle, for his every effort was directed to constant mortification and continual progress in virtue. He held his thoughts in check, because he had become master over his senses. These he watched over with scrupulous vigilance, and lost no occasion of mortifying them. Never was he seen indulging in the perfume of a flower, or other agreeable odor. When he visited the sick in the hospitals, he betook himself to those whose maladies were most repugnant to his nature; and he performed the most loathsome office without a sign of aversion.

Disciplines, hair-cloth, fasting on bread and water were all used by him to afflict his body, and so great was his thirst for penance that it could never be satisfied. His delicate health forbade his superiors acceding in this matter to his desires. This unwillingness in his superiors was the only thing that awoke in him an impulse to complain.

He confessed to a Father one day that in religion he performed no penance at all compared with what he had done in the world; but he found consolation in the thought that "religion is like a boat, in which those who, through obedience, do nothing advance as rapidly as those who exhaust their strength at the oars."

One day, he had obtained from the Master of novices permission to fast on bread and water, but the Father, perceiving that he had taken scarcely anything at the table, ordered him to go to the second table and eat what was put before him. He obeyed at once, and when one of his companions afterwards jokingly spoke to him of this strange way of fasting. "What can I

do," said Aloysius, smiling. "I am become as a beast of burden in thy sight, O Lord."

Not less exact was he in mortifying his hearing. If anyone began to recount the news of the day or speak of idle things, he would endeavor to change the conversation.

His guard over his eyes had been severe in the world. In religion he even surpassed his former vigilance. His faculties were so preoccupied with the contemplation of God and His divine mysteries that the things of the earth seemed to have lost all attraction for him. So completely had he overcome himself that he was never led by a sudden movement of curiosity to lift his eyes and gaze about him. Sense of taste he seemed to have lost altogether, and appeared never to notice what kind of food was placed before him, except that he preferred what was least pleasant. While eating, his mind was occupied by the reading that was going on at the meal, or else he reflected on some pious thought, on the last bitter drink of our Lord on the

cross, or on the wonders that took place at the Last Supper of Our Saviour with his disciples.

Greater still was his watchfulness over his words. Were one to lose sight of the great dangers and the serious evils to a spiritual life that may arise from the unguarded use of the tongue, one might be led to consider the care of Aloysius in his words as excessive. But he realized the words of Scripture: "He that sins not in word, the same is a perfect man." "If any-one think himself religious, not bridling his tongue, his piety is vain." And he often prayed in the words of the Royal Prophet: "Place a guard, O, Lord, over my tongue."

The whole motive for the love of silence manifested by Aloysius lay in the fear he had of committing some imperfection in speaking, and again in the fact that the spiritual delights with which God inundated his soul, took from him all desire to hold converse with men. When he had to speak, he weighed, as it were, each word that he uttered, and during recreation he would

frequently check himself in his conversation, esteeming it better to remain silent, or, did he believe it opportune to continue, he subdued himself by a few moments of silence.

Although, as we have seen, he highly esteemed every kind of corporal mortification, still he set greater store on humiliations, judging them to be more necessary and more conducive to progress in spiritual life. So persistent was his practice of every species of humiliation, that he seemed no longer to feel them. He frequently sought permission to go through the streets of Rome dressed in old patched clothes, with a bag on his back to beg from the passers-by. When someone inquired of him if he felt any shame or repugnance in this practice, he answered: "None whatever; for I set out to imitate Jesus Christ, and think of the Eternal merit I can gain."

During the first month of the saint's sojourn in religion, he showed himself so modest and recollected, so rigorous in overcoming his senses, so desirous of humil-

iation, such a perfect observer of his rules, so humble and amiable towards his brethren, so fervent in spiritual things, so inflamed with charity, in a word so perfect in every virtue, that his fellow novices looked upon him as a saint and esteemed as precious relics whatever had served him for his use.

So continual and so severe had been his mortification since his early childhood, that he seemed to have a sort of impassibility that rendered him insensible to all things human. Never was there noticed in him the least sign of anger or impatience, or the slightest movement of passion.

This is the more surprising since he was naturally of a sanguine temperament, quick and choleric beyond boys of his age. He had arrived at that perfect calm that reigned in his soul as the result of his generous and constant practice of self-abasement and mortification.

He was often heard to say that he that is not a man of prayer and mortification will never attain to perfection.

After he left the novitiate to begin the studies of the Society he continued his life of mortification and gave everywhere the most perfect example of the spirit of sacrifice. He was ingenious in finding means to humiliate himself before others.

At one time his occupation consisted in brushing the cobwebs from the walls of the house. This he did with the greatest care, and no human respect ever prevented him from performing this lowly office. On the contrary, he seemed to be on the lookout for humiliation, so that when some great personage with his suite was occupied in going through the college, Aloysius would appear in soiled cassock with his broom in his hand and proceed to dust the walls in the presence of the noble company. His greatest ambition was to be despised and to be accounted a menial of the house. This conduct of his was so habitual that whenever the Fathers of the House beheld Aloysius passing by, equipped with broom and dust-pan, they concluded that there was some illustrious stranger in the neighborhood.

He never missed an occasion of going to his superior and asking permission to perform a penance in the Refectory or to take an extra discipline. He would frequently ask, though he knew he would be refused on account of the weakness of his health.

Chapter III.

HIS YOUTH, STUDIES, VOCATION.

OF all the periods in the life of man the most important, the one on which depend the highest interests, is the time of youth. The child, it is true, forms many habits which give shape to his future, but he can scarcely be said to realize the meaning and the purpose of his existence. He lives in the atmosphere of innocence and even after reason has sway, he beholds in life a certain amount of fable and fiction. He is mystified; he wonders; but he does not totally comprehend the value of life.

In those few years however, between our childhood and the time when we enter upon our determined work, we begin to know what life means; to understand

what is expected of us. It is at this time, while still under the care of our parents, we learn that we must choose our own path. The days of youth then are the brightest and the most important in our existence.

To that part of our saint's life we have now come which claims especially the attention and consideration of young men, although all, old as well as young, can find here many a noble lesson. Even at this early day St. Aloysius, young in years, was old in judgment and virtue.

In another chapter of his life, his deeds of penance and mortification during this period were dwelt upon at a just length, but here we glance at two phases which must enter into the life of every young man, namely his studies and his choice of a vocation.

As we have already seen, he received his first knowledge from the lips of his fond mother. From her he first learned to lisp with affection the name of Jesus, and to love the name of Mary. By her he was led onward to the light of God's grace.

And truly it must afterwards have been a great joy to that mother, when she beheld the sanctity of her son, to know that she was the first, in the hands of God, to have instilled into his soul sentiments of love of God, and to have impressed upon his mind thoughts of purity. And, as she was the first to teach him the truths of religion and to place before him principles of piety, so, too, was she the first to instruct him in the rudiments of education. He received then the fundamental frame-work for his studies at his home in Castiglione.

In the year 1577, however, the marquis, in order to give his children all the benefits of a good education, determined to send his two sons to Florence. At that day, Florence was the great centre of education in northern Italy. There art and literature flourished. The standard of classical studies had been elevated, and the university of that city had become one of the most renowned of Christian times.

Of course, our saint, as he was only nine years of age

did not enter upon any very advanced study of the classics or of art; the main object of his stay at Florence was to learn the Latin language and to perfect himself in his native tongue.

Nevertheless, even in this short period of the life of St. Aloysius, one can learn a lesson on beholding his zeal and application to whatever duty was assigned him.

To-day, as in fact at all times, the student has many tasks imposed that are naturally disagreeable. And generally too, the student grumbles at these tasks; he does not want unpleasant work. Why should he interpret classical authors or write Greek or Latin exercises? Why should he spend hours in working upon his essays? Why pore over the beauties of literature, or drone over the difficulties of grammar?

Such are his thoughts, and his work at times may be brought to a conclusion in neglect and haste. What a model of student life and work was St. Aloysius. He too was compelled to study, and to do work, no doubt,

distasteful. Under the guidance of his tutor he became proficient in his studies.

He had to work out a passage in Latin as well as any other who has studied the ancient writers. No kind hand placed the meaning of the words between the lines, because he happened to be a saint; no invisible helper arranged the words that they might be more easily understood. No Divine inspiration gave him the correct thought of a passage in Cicero or of a verse in Sophocles; but this he was obliged to do for himself.

So far he was the counterpart of any other student. But now comes the lesson. Did he grumble because his work was unpleasant? No, but he received the task with joy. Did he object because he was commanded? No, but he welcomed every obligation. We are not told that he took a special delight in study; we are not told that he was far more capable of this work than most young men. But if a lesson were disagreeable, with the spirit of a follower of our Lord, he made of that

unpleasant work a means of merit. He performed it with diligence; every particular was carefully attended to; for he understood that every deed done in obedience was done for God's honor.

So in this young student at Florence we have an example of zeal, patience, attention and even of that which is higher than all these, an example of love for God.

The effect of this saint's example is still more heightened when we consider his surroundings. He was of one of the noblest families in Italy, looked upon as the coming heir to all his father's possessions and titles, courted and respected by all the nobility of Florence; and yet how does he value these honors? He looks upon them as worthy of contempt.

Far from desiring or welcoming them, he rather shuns them. He does not seek the presence of his equals in rank, but remains at home engaged in study and devotion. The only time we hear of him in the society of the nobility, during his days at Florence, is when he

and his brother, in accordance with their father's wish, visit the Grand Duke to pay that noble the customary attention due his rank.

In November, 1579, when St. Aloysius was eleven years of age, the marquis removed his two sons to Mantua where they lived at the Castle of St. Sebastian. His studies here were continued under the direction of Father Bresciani and always with the same zeal and good will on the part of Aloysius.

At various times he was compelled to take part in the celebrations at court, as the Duke of Mantua was a cousin of the Marquis of Castiglione; and Aloysius knew that any disrespect shown to the duke, who was the head of the house of Gonzaga, would be displeasing to his father.

However, the ceremonials, the grandeur, the empty frivolities of court-life were anything but agreeable to the serious and devout mind of our saint. It was while here that Aloysius was first afflicted with sickness, yet every suffering was received with joy and patience.

But we must give our attention to other matters which have a weightier claim on our consideration.

After the winter had passed, the marquis and his family returned to Castiglione. We have already seen how he met here St. Charles Borromeo, from whose hands he had the great joy of receiving his first communion.

Here, as at Mantua, he continued his studies, but what claimed his attention most were books of religion, the life of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Saints.

Even for his study of the classics, he did not select books that touched upon light or trivial matters, but rather chose those which, even though written by Pagans, would still be useful to his soul. He studied such works as those of Seneca, Plutarch and Valerius Maximus which treat of morals, and, we are told, that he often made use of these works in his conversation.

It was in the year 1581, as we have seen, that the marquis and his wife with their children, Aloysius, Ralph and Isabella, set out for Spain on the invitation

of Philip II., to be present at festivities to be held at his court.

This was to be an eventful epoch in the life of Aloysius, for it was during this visit that he determined upon his vocation and upon the particular way in which this vocation was to be followed. Arriving at Spain, Aloysius and his brother were made pages of honor to the young prince. Study took up a great part of the saint's time, for he knew there was no royal way to learning.

He had finished the study of the classics and literature in Italy, and now, going a step higher, he devoted his time to logic, astronomy, philosophy and natural theology. In the first he was taught by an ecclesiastic of high rank, while the king's mathematician, Dimas, by name, taught him the motions of the stars and planets.

In philosophy and theology he became so proficient that two years later, while visiting at Alcala, he took up the argument in a theological thesis, at

the school there, and displayed so much knowledge for one so young, that all who heard him marveled. We have a proof of his proficiency in the Latin tongue when, in 1582, he was selected, though against his own will, to deliver a Latin address before King Philip.

The time was now at hand for St. Aloysius to take action in obtaining the one aspiration of his life, to become a religious. As we have seen, the marquis wished Aloysius to enter upon a military career. He thought that court life would soon drive away from the mind of his son all thoughts of a religious life. But this result did not follow. Aloysius was confident that his call came from God and he determined to act consistently with that vocation.

The first attractions our saint saw in a religious life were when, at the age of thirteen, he paid a visit to the Barnabite Fathers of St. Paul Beheaded, near Castiglione. He beheld in these devout priests true examples of happiness; he saw the tranquillity of an

untroubled conscience; he saw the quiet and calm of the life of a religious as compared with the noisy and ever-varying life of a man in the world.

And all these made on his young mind an impression which was never effaced. Gradually the wish grew upon him to become a religious. The things of the world and of life which before he had disliked, he now began to hate. Soon his aspiration changed into a firm resolve to enter upon this life in which he could devote himself wholly to the honor of God.

And so we see him with this purpose in mind, even before he set out for Spain. The sights at court, instead of weakening this purpose, as the marquis had hoped, only urged him to immediate action.

It was this aspiration in his heart that impelled him to go frequently to the sacraments, to practice piety and perform works of penance, to flee from the attractions of court, to be simple in his attire even to a degree far below his station. His coming among a number of nobles caused all light talk to cease, and

immediately the conversation took a serious and generally a religious turn.

He despised himself, he thought not of the earth, but only of heavenly things, so that it seemed as if a heavenly spirit had entered into him and dwelt in a bodily frame.

Aloysius at first thought he should join the order of Franciscans in Spain, because of his love for mortification; but for two reasons he relinquished this idea.

The first was that if, on account of his weak condition, he were not able to undergo the mortifications, he would be brought back into the world as an ecclesiastic, and the second reason was that his mother was strongly opposed to this choice.

His nature was not inclined to those orders that devote themselves entirely to active life and to the assistance of those in suffering, but it was inclined rather to a life of contemplation. He pictured almost a heaven in the lives of those men who could give themselves up to meditation of divine things, who could

pierce the mists and clouds of life, and with the eyes of the soul look upon the glories of eternity. This would have been a paradise for Aloysius.

But even here, when his whole future depended upon his choice, our saint gave up his own desires, and remembering that St. Thomas had said that those orders gave the most glory to God, which did not devote their whole time to contemplation, but which gave part of their time to teaching and preaching in the work of salvation, he determined to enter one of these.

At last he chose the Society of Jesus, then established about one hundred years. There were four principal reasons that caused this choice. First, because this was a newly instituted order, and all religious duties in it were carefully observed. Second, that in this society a vow was taken never to accept any ecclesiastical dignity. Third, because the Society of Jesus devotes so much time and labor to the education of youth. Fourth, because one of the Society's principal objects is the conversion of pagans in foreign lands.

These reasons had great attractions for Aloysius, for his humility would not allow him to accept any dignity, and he looked upon the education of youth and the conversion of the heathen as two works most pleasing to God.

He wished to be assured of his choice. He confided in his mother, who approved of his purpose, and he prayed to the Blessed Virgin to give him means of knowing whether his choice was pleasing to God.

For this purpose he prepared to receive communion on the Feast of the Assumption. While praying to our Blessed Mother, he received an answer clear and defined in his inmost soul, by which he was convinced that he was divinely called to enter the Society of Jesus.

Immediately, as commanded by the voice within him, he made known his intentions to his confessor, Father Paterno, of the Society of Jesus. This worthy priest, after due deliberation, saw that the vocation of the youth was clear, but told Aloysius that he could

not be received by the Order without the consent of his parents.

This our saint immediately endeavored to obtain. He told all to his mother. Can we imagine the tearful joy of that mother as she heard these words of gladness? Her hopes, which she had entertained even from the birth of Aloysius, were about to be realized. For this purpose she had spent many a happy hour in Castiglione, teaching her saintly son; for this one purpose she had always guarded, watched over and cared for him. Now she saw that her son was about to give his life to the service of God, and the one hope of her life was to be realized; her one wish was to be granted.

His father, on the contrary, was enraged. The marquis did not wish to offend God, but as he himself had spent all his life as a soldier in the cause of his country, or at the courts of nobles, so he wished Aloysius, his eldest born, to follow him as his heir, to keep his name in glory on the battle-field, and to perpetuate the dignity of the Gonzagas at court. This was the

marquis' fondest wish, and it was dashed to the ground by the few words in which his son announced his intentions.

He bade Aloysius leave him, and threatened even to have him stripped and beaten. He tried in every way to fancy that the zeal of his son would disappear, but in vain. Finally, as he was a good Christian, he was compelled to cease his opposition to the vocation of his son. This was in 1583, when Aloysius was fifteen years of age.

Father Francis Gonzaga, a cousin of the marquis, and General of the Franciscans, happened to come to Madrid at this time, and he, too, was convinced of the vocation of Aloysius.

One day our saint resolved to take a decided step, and so, when passing the house of the Jesuits with his brother and servants, he left them and determined to remain there. They tried to dissuade him, but to no purpose, until the marquis himself sent a command for him to return at once. This he obeyed.

The marquis tried to induce Father Francis to persuade Aloysius to give up his desire of becoming a religious, but this the father could not conscientiously do. Finally the marquis agreed that as soon as they returned to Italy he would allow his son to follow his own inclinations. How he kept his promise, we shall see.

Father Gonzaga accompanied the family on their journey homeward, and from conversation with him Aloysius learned much of the life and duties of religious. During the voyage they had many long and grave conversations, which, as our saint afterwards told Father Cepari, made a deep impression on his soul.

Aloysius looked forward to his arrival in Italy, where he thought he would be free, but alas! his hopes were to meet with disappointment, for the marquis, still cherishing the idea of dissuading Aloysius from his purpose, delayed the fulfillment of his promise, because he wished our saint and his brother Ralph to visit many of the nobles of Italy to announce the return of the

marquis to Castiglione. Aloysius could do nothing but submit, and so he underwent again the disagreeable observances of court-life.

After this round of visits was completed and the brothers had returned to Castiglione, we again find the marquis striving to turn Aloysius from his purpose. He had gathered many persons of high dignity to bring objections before his son. The first who came was a bishop, sent by Duke William, with a message to the effect that if the life of a layman were unpleasant, let him embrace the ecclesiastical state but remain in the world so as to be raised to honor and dignity; for in such a position much good could be done as might be seen from the example of Charles Borromeo.

The second objection came from Aloysius' uncle, who had interests at stake, for his own property was to fall to Aloysius, and in order to retain it in his family he wished his daughter to be married to the heir of Castiglione.

But his objections failed like those of the duke's messenger. These were followed by pleadings of influential persons in the family, but all to no avail. They failed, and one, the arch-priest of Castiglione, was gained over to favor Aloysius.

After all these efforts the marquis on questioning Aloysius found that his purpose was unshaken. At this the infuriated father, in a fit of passion, ordered his son to leave him. Our saint took him at his word and retired to a convent which the marquis had established on his grounds. Near the convent there was a grotto, and thither Aloysius retired with his books and subjected himself to strict penance and mortification. For some time he was left alone.

On learning the whereabouts of the saint, the father at once ordered him to return home. Aloysius obeyed, but in his own room at the castle he redoubled his former penance. He would scourge himself until blood was caused to flow. A servant related the severe mortification Aloysius forced himself to undergo, and

the marquis, who was then sick, commanded his servants to carry him to his son's room.

There such a sight of suffering and pain met his eyes, that his anger was turned to pity, and his obstinacy to willingness. Such was the effect of it that not long after, the marquis wrote a letter to Scipio Gonzaga, patriarch of Jerusalem, and brother of Francis Gonzaga, general of the Franciscans, permitting him to offer to the general of the Society of Jesus his eldest son, the dearest possession he had on earth.

At last the saint had touched his father's heart. Afterward, indeed, the marquis still showed some unwillingness, but at present all went smoothly for Aloysius.

In the letter of the marquis to Scipio Gonzaga, he suggested that Novellara be chosen as the place for Aloysius to make his novitiate. He wished this because some relation of his family lived at that place. But Aloysius, desiring to be as far as possible from those he knew in the world, wrote to the Father-general, stating

his father's dislike to his joining a religious order, and asked that some other place be chosen.

The Father-general wrote to the marquis, saying that he thought Rome would be the best place for Aloysius to spend his novitiate. From a letter of Aloysius at this time, we can see how thankful he was, and we can also see that all preparations were made for him to relinquish every title to the property of his father. The letter runs as follows:

"I thank your Reverence for this great benefit, but words fail me to express, as I wish, the extent of my gratitude. I give myself up entirely to your wishes, while awaiting the time when I shall be permitted to go and throw myself at your feet. If I do not fly instantly to Rome, it is because my father requires me to make a formal renunciation of all my hereditary rights to the Marquisate of Castiglione, in favor of my brother. Although the consent of the Emperor is needed for this transfer, since the fief is independent, I hope soon to terminate this affair."

Everything was being arranged for the departure of Aloysius. About this time, however, another delay ensued. The marquis had some negotiations to be carried on at Milan, and being unable himself to attend to these, he sent Aloysius to transact the necessary

business. He had been commissioned often before to transact business, and in this case also he conducted everything with prudence and ability.

While at Milan, Aloysius remained at the Jesuits' house, and followed the religious exercises there. For a number of days he waited, expecting every moment to be called home to complete the transfer of the titles. He heard that the Emperor had given his consent, and he now wondered why he was still kept at Milan.

One day, at last, the marquis himself came to Milan, and with the old desire still in his heart strove to turn Aloysius from his purpose. This time he entreats. He begs Aloysius to stay in the world; to be a good ruler over his people; to honor the name of Gonzaga.

Aloysius heard with respect, but was firm in his refusal, for he felt he was called by God. The marquis, however, determined to abide by the decision of Father Gagliardi, a well-known priest in Milan. Aloysius was brought before both his father and the priest and there examined.

Father Gagliardi at last decided that Aloysius was right in wishing to enter on the life of a religious. Upon this decision the marquis returned to Castiglione, whither Aloysius followed in a few days. On his journey from Milan to Castiglione he stopped at Mantua, where there was a celebration in honor of the ambassadors who had just returned. The city was one scene of festivity, but this was no attraction for Aloysius, and he remained at the house of the Society of Jesus, following their religious exercises.

Many days passed after his return before the matter of his vocation was mentioned, but at last he himself suggested that the time had come for him to complete all the arrangements.

Then the marquis, with persistence in his obstinacy, said that he did not recollect making any promise to this effect. Aloysius was amazed. He had pictured troubles and delays, but to be denied in this manner was the worst blow he could receive. His father said of course he could go, but if he did he would be no

longer recognized as the son of the Marquis of Castiglione.

Aloysius retired to his room in tears. At length, striving to conciliate his father, Aloysius expressed his willingness to put off his entrance into religion for two or three years. Two conditions, however, were attached to this agreement. First, that he should be allowed to spend the interval at Rome, and secondly, that the marquis should at once send his consent in writing to the Father-general. For two days he refused, but finally consented.

At last the one wish of Aloysius was granted; the one object of his desires was attained. After a little delay all preparations were completed for him to sign the deed of renunciation to all his titles. This was done at Mantua, in the presence of many princes of the land. There he renounced riches and power, and embraced poverty and humility.

The next morning he set out for Rome, accompanied by attendants. On this journey he still kept up his

usual spiritual exercises. When at last Rome was reached, what joy must have come to his youthful heart!

What a lesson of perseverance his life affords! This young saint had overcome the objections of a worldly father; he had resisted the words of many princes; he had fought with troubles and delays, and at last he came out the conqueror. Truly, God sent these sufferings to try our Saint. Aloysius at last gained his wish. He entered the house of the Society of Jesus at Rome, and there we leave him in the joy and happiness of a peaceful home.

Chapter IV.

HIS NOVITIATE.

WE have followed the saint in the dangers and temptations which beset him in the world, and have beheld his earnest perseverance and victory over the powers of darkness. From early childhood he had prayed that the Holy Spirit would direct him in his choice of a state of life, and, following that light which had been given him, had determined by the grace of God, to enter upon religious life in the Society of Jesus. The object of this society is the greater glory of God, *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, and the sanctification of souls.

The questions asked of the postulant for admission acquaint him at once with the life that awaits him—with

its aims, its duties and the sacrifices it demands. "Are you ready," he is asked, "to renounce the world and all hope of temporal goods? Are you ready, if necessary, to beg your bread from door to door for the love of Jesus Christ? Are you ready to reside in any country, and to embrace any employment wherein your superiors may think you will be most useful to the glory of God and the good of souls? Are you ready to obey in all things, in which there is evidently no sin, the superiors who hold toward you the place of God? Are you resolved to renounce generously, without reserve, all those things which men in general love and embrace, and will you accept and desire with all your strength what our Lord Jesus Christ loved and embraced? Are you prepared to accept, in imitation of him, humiliations, unmerited contempt, calumnies and insults?"

If the postulant answer these questions and some others, of a like nature, in the affirmative, he is received into the novitiate, where he remains two years in deep

seclusion and constant prayer, laying aside all study with the exception of a short lesson each day as an exercise of the memory.

He devotes himself solely to the attainment of virtues, particularly those of child-like obedience, humility, self-abnegation and perfect poverty. Part of his time is spent in attending to the work of the house, teaching the catechism to poor children and visiting the sick in hospitals.

It was to this high and noble life that Aloysius resolved to dedicate himself, renouncing the world with all its brilliant prospects. With joyful soul he longed to submit himself to rules which promised to exercise him in virtue and remove him far from the blighting influence of error and sin. The master of novices, Father John Baptist Pescatore, himself a very holy man, soon recognized the saintly character of Aloysius. He saw that there was confided to him a most sacred charge which imposed a weighty responsibility. His experience taught him that it was necessary to treat

Aloysius with the greatest prudence so as not to injure or damage the precious gifts of humility and obedience which adorned his soul.

While in the world Aloysius had acquired the habit of doing all things with great exactness and care. In the same manner, but with even greater diligence, he now performed the duties which were laid upon him by his superiors, and displayed at all times wonderful obedience and humility. While walking, Aloysius had a habit of bowing his head and casting his eyes down. In order to try his obedience, to foster the virtue of humility, and to cure him of this habit, the master of novices ordered him to put on a pasteboard collar which would force him to hold his head erect. With much edification did the holy man behold the youth wearing this instrument of humility with smiling countenance, and performing his duties in a joyful spirit. Doubtless Aloysius held before himself the thorn-crowned head of his divine Master, and therefore was happy in his soul to suffer humiliation for His sake.

Let us not suppose that St. Aloysius was always free from temptation and that he always experienced fervor in spiritual exercises. He had, it is true, previous to this period, experienced a holy fervor in his religious practices; but now, in a religious community, surrounded by all that was calculated to make him devout, he was oppressed by dryness and desolation. But though he thus suffered, Aloysius ceased not to perform his usual devotions with all possible zeal and exactness, submitting in this, as in all things, to the holy will of God. Thus did God try our saint; thus, in His goodness, did He bestow on him the means of obtaining greater merit by performing his spiritual exercises without the consolation usually attendant upon them.

This trial, however, did not last long, for after a short time Aloysius experienced his former fervor and heavenly consolation. The devil now assailed him, tempting him with the questions: "What use can the Society of Jesus make of you?" "What have you come here to do?" With great violence did the powers of

darkness thus attack him. Aloysius, however, soon discovered the import and the source of these questions and quickly banished them.

He had been two months and a half in the Society of Jesus, when he received news of the death of his father. The feelings of natural love, responding to the Divine Will, had been supernaturalized; therefore, when he learned the sad news, he received it with perfect resignation. Great was the edification of the Fathers, to behold in one so young such conformity to the will of God. The marquis had died a happy death, and for some time previous to his last illness had exercised himself in works of penance. Afterwards, in a letter of consolation to his mother, Aloysius wrote: "Now I may say—in a true and new sense—'Our Father, Who art in Heaven.'"

When in the world, Aloysius had carefully shunned every fault, had kept a watchful guard over his senses; and now in the Society of Jesus he strove with even greater diligence to use them in what was most pleasing

to God. He seemed always to bear in mind that man must give an account of every idle word he utters, therefore he cherished silence and avoided all useless conversation. When his equals or inferiors addressed him on some idle topic, he would admonish them; when so addressed by one whose dignity forbade such an admonition, he showed by his manner his distaste for such conversation.

The desire of mortification, which he displayed in his observance of silence, was borne out in his treatment of all the other senses. He was never known to enjoy the scent of a flower.

How varied the ways that God has manifested to His saints of giving to Him honor and glory! St. Theresa was raised, by the perfume of flowers, to a high degree of contemplation. It was the part of Aloysius to glorify God by forbidding himself even the most permissible indulgence, that he might honor the passion of our Divine Lord, and make reparation for sin —the cause of that passion.

He loved to visit hospitals and to nurse those afflicted with contagious diseases. The sweet perfume of virtue must surely have pervaded those sick-rooms and refreshed the invalids when this young saint, with loving care attended to their wants, endeavoring to alleviate their suffering. His kind and sympathetic heart, which had no regard for himself, melted with loving charity for the suffering of those around him.

He guarded his eyes while in the world; in Religion he was even more watchful over them. When sent one day to the refectory to bring the Rector's book, he did not even know where the Rector had been sitting, so careful had he been not to indulge his curiosity.

The novices were accustomed to visit a very pretty vineyard in their daily walk. One day they went a different route and visited another. When they returned home, Aloysius was asked which of the two he admired the more, when, to the surprise of all, he acknowledged that he was not aware even that they

had been to a strange vineyard, but he remembered that in his walk he had that day seen a chapel which he had not before noticed. How great must have been his inward recollection, when naught of this world had even the least attraction for him. He found his happiness in the things of heaven; he needed nothing else.

Many might consider his strict silence and guard over his eyes as the result of scrupulousness; but such was not the case. His confessor, Fr. Bellarmin, has testified that he was entirely free from scruples. Such, however, was the purity of his conscience that he detected the slightest faults and was accustomed to refer them to his superiors.

His freedom from scruples is evident from the following. Out of a spirit of religious poverty he had always loved old clothes. When sent one day to the tailor for a new cassock, the mortification which he felt was evident in his manner. His Superior advised him to examine his conscience carefully and see whether this

did not arise from some species of self-love. Aloysius complied, and during several days assiduously examined his motives. He then reported to his Superior that he was unable to discover any defect in his intentions, and felt certain that self-love had not prompted him.

Aloysius considered that the abasement of self is more beneficial than even corporal austerities. He would often seek permission to go into the streets of Rome and beg from door to door. When asked if he were not ashamed, he would answer that he set before himself the example of Christ and the eternal reward, adding, with the good sense which was characteristic of him, that he could not see any real cause for mortification: "People who see me, either know me, or they do not. If they do not know me, I ought not to care what they think; and if they do know me, I really lose none of their esteem; on the contrary, they may probably be edified, so that, in fact, there might be more danger of vain glory than of shame, for even the

worldly often admire those who make themselves poor for the love of God."

His patience in receiving reproof, even when the correction resulted from some misunderstanding, was marvelous. In fact, he rejoiced when reproved, and his joy was the greater if the reproof was undeserved. He was sent on one occasion to assist the brother in the kitchen. This brother was instructed to try Aloysius by finding fault with all that he would do. The brother obeyed, and even complained of what had been most accurately done.

Great was the good brother's astonishment when he beheld Aloysius receiving all reproofs with profound humility and reverence, not once attempting to justify himself. He recognized in his Superiors the authority of God, and the more lowly their rank, the greater joy his faith experienced in obeying them.

Aloysius bore rebukes with so tranquil a countenance, and with so humble a demeanor, that it has been said that he experienced joy rather than pain on

such occasions. But there was one species of mortification which brought a blush to his cheeks, and evidently ruffled the tranquillity of his pure soul; and that was when he was praised.

A doctor who was visiting him while sick, spoke one day of Aloysius' noble birth and illustrious ancestors, lauding the deeds which had given honor to the house of Gonzaga. Aloysius, disturbed and grieved by the doctor's words, replied, "We are now religious and no longer what we were." From this incident we can well understand how Aloysius despised the rank of this world and considered that true riches consist in purity of soul.

After three months spent in the novitiate of San Andrea, the novices were sent on a visit to the Professed House of the Society. Gladly did Aloysius repair thither, hoping to gain many spiritual benefits from the example of those who were of higher rank in Religion. Great benefit, however, was derived by the Scholastics, and even by aged priests, in beholding the sanctity of Aloysius.

Our saint's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, proved here a source of great edification. The Fathers loved to hear him discourse on this subject, and from each conversation carried away some fruitful knowledge.

They themselves related that they celebrated the Holy Sacrifice with a fervor greater than usual on the mornings following the days on which they had listened to Aloysius. At the Gesu, the saint often served five or six masses in one morning, assisting at each with great devotion; he never grew weary.

He was more thoughtful, however, in regard to others; whenever he perceived a companion fatigued he hastened to the Superior and respectfully mentioned the fact. He spent the time intervening between the masses in devout prayer and meditation.

The time had now arrived when he had so completely gained the mastery over his passions, that he was unable to discover in himself even venial offences.

Fearful lest this proceeded from spiritual blindness, he anxiously sought the advice of his Superiors. He was entirely passive, trusting altogether in God. Yet, by nature, he was neither phlegmatic nor dull, but quick, ardent and sensitive, with perceptions and feelings at all times beyond his years. The victory was therefore the triumph of God's grace, operating in conjunction with an indomitable will and an untiring perseverance.

Near the end of October 1586, it was decided by the Superiors of the Society to send Father Pescatore, who had been ill for some time, on a visit to Naples. Aloysius and two companions, who were themselves in poor health, accompanied him. At Naples, as had been the case at Rome, he edified all by his conduct. Many were accustomed to watch at the door of the college in order to see him and observe the example he gave, even when walking.

During the time he remained at Naples he suffered very much from headaches. Here he was allowed to

mortify himself in many ways which his superiors at Rome had not permitted.

His delicate health seems to have been forgotten through regard for his sanctity. He was allowed to go out attired in clothing suitable only for warm weather. The novices were accustomed to visit the Professed House on Sunday afternoons, and there assisted at Vespers. Often on such occasions, when the weather was most inclement, Aloysius was permitted to make this visit, when other novices in delicate health were forbidden by the Father Minister.

In consequence of these, and other circumstances, his health grew worse, till he was finally sent back to Rome. His return to the Holy City was hailed with joy by his fellow-novices who had felt the loss of the gentle, loving, saintly character that had brightened and hallowed the days spent among them.

The two years of his novitiate were now ended. He had faithfully observed his rules in all things. He had set an example which has been most fruitful, and

which will last till the end of time. In short, no greater praise can be given to him than that he was a perfect novice in the Society of Jesus, which has produced so many Saints, who have rendered illustrious the golden pages of the History of our Holy Religion.

Chapter V.

HIS SCHOLASTIC LIFE.

ALOYSIUS had now passed two years in the Society of Jesus, and on the second anniversary of his reception into the order, November 25, 1587, he pronounced his first vows, promising eternal allegiance to God, in poverty, chastity, and obedience.

During his noviceship, Aloysius had obtained a complete mastery over self, over all his senses and passions, and had advanced to a high degree of sanctity, To his companions he was perfect. Wherever he went, whatever he did, he was always the same, ever recollected, walking in the presence of God.

The completion of his noviceship, and his first vows, was indeed a great happiness for Aloysius. For one of the ambitions of his life was acquired. He was now drawn much nearer to God; he felt that he had cleared one of the deep abysses which, wide and yawning, lay on the path which leads from earth to Heaven.

A letter to his mother, written shortly after his vows, shows us something of the spirit of the young saint at this time.

"*My most honored mother in Christ, most illustrious Lady:*

"I have lately received a letter from you, which caused me much joy, from the good account it gave of yourself and of the whole family, and not less from what it told me of my brother, whom may our Lord direct even as I hope. This I recommend to God in my prayers, only begging you to salute him in my name, and to remind him to practice what is incumbent upon him, as well as upon our house, that is submission to whom it is due, as our father of happy memory

enjoined. Illustrious Lady, I announce to you the gift I made of myself to his Divine Majesty by taking my vows on St. Catherine's day, for which, while inviting you, dear mother, to praise our Lord, I, at the same time, beg you to implore Him that I may keep them and advance in the state of life to which He has called me, so that, together, after this life is over, we may be united in the possession of Him in Heaven, where He is so lovingly expecting all His own.

"I accept at the same time the offer which you made me, mother, in your last, of some more money for defraying the expenses of letters; I will beg you, therefore, to let me have twenty-five scudi. In conclusion, I recommend myself to you in our Lord, from whom I beg for you increase of His Holy grace in all things.

"I am, illustrious lady, your most obedient son in Christ,

"ALOYSIUS GONZAGA,
"Of the Society of Jesus

"ROME, December 11, 1587."

Filled with this spirit of humility he entered upon his scholastic life, resolved to mortify himself with such austerities, to devote himself with such energy to spiritual exercises, to apply himself with such diligence to his studies, that when called to the holy state of the priesthood, he should be better able, by his example, his every action and his learning, to draw more souls to God. So earnestly did he fulfill his resolutions, so faithfully did he adhere to the spirit of his vows, that even before he had completed his scholastic life God decreed that his life's work was finished, and called him to his reward, to His abode of everlasting life, mid the joys and happiness of Heaven.

If in his novitiate he had given evidence of sanctity, much more did he do so now. He seemed to have risen above himself and to be dwelling in some place between earth and Heaven. In his higher station, his humility, great before, seemed to grow in proportion to his position. He desired nothing more eagerly than to humble himself. It was his frequent practice to go to

the lower end of the refectory and dine with the brothers. He always treated them as his superiors, until reprimanded by the Rector and told that he must not practice a humiliation which the respect due to the clerical tonsure rendered unbefitting. Aloysius received the reprimand without offering any excuse.

About this time the young saint began to be troubled lest his rank and station in life before he entered the novitiate should influence his superiors in their conduct towards him. This fear increased and Aloysius' surmise was confirmed by an incident which happened just then.

It seems that the College at Rome was so crowded with priests, scholastics, novices and students, that it was impossible to give each one a room for himself. This privilege was granted only to the priests and to those whose health seemed to require it. Aloysius, always delicate, though never complaining, was considered ill enough to have a separate room. But the young saint felt sure this had been given him simply

and solely because he was of noble birth. He went, therefore, to the superior and represented to him the jealousies which might arise from his having a room, and he thought, also, for the sake of example, it would be more advisable for him to have a companion.

Another incident is related of St. Aloysius, which tends to show his deep love of God and his earnest desire of being humbled. When he had finished his earlier studies and before he began to teach, he went to the Rector of the college, and told him that he considered himself incapable of teaching either a grammar or a Latin class, as he himself was neither a good grammarian, nor well versed in Latin. But he thought it better for him to teach the little ones in the lower sections, with whom he could grow up and thus master his difficulties. It seems providential, indeed, that he who in after years was to be the "Patron of Youth," who was to be held up by the fathers of the Church as the model for imitation, and who, throughout the world and in all ages, was to be invoked as the special

friend of the young and their intercessor with God, should thus prove his desire of devoting himself to the little ones.

The saint was very skillful in hiding his sanctity and was ever offering excuses for, and making plans to hide his love of humiliation. This was well known throughout the college. So the superior, thinking this might be a device of Aloysius, to indulge in his love of humiliation, and not altogether sure as to the young saint's ignorance of Latin and grammar, placed in his room a companion capable of judging his ability.

The superior's surmises proved correct; as it was discovered that Aloysius was an excellent grammarian, and could speak Latin fluently. The refusal of the director to grant his wishes was to him a new humiliation. To other persons, the refusal would have been sufficient, but to the mind of Aloysius it was only what he deserved, and so, instead of teaching children, he went about the streets of Rome, begging, dressed in shabby clothes and with a bag on his back.

He loved to busy himself with the domestic duties of the house, sometimes assisting in the kitchen, sometimes washing the dishes, and the work in which he took the most delight was bringing the food to the gate and distributing it to the poor. These, and tasks like these, were the delight of the young saint's heart. The more humiliating the work, and the deeper his abasement, the greater was his joy.

His love of mortification, at this time, led him, sometimes, to inflict such austerities upon himself, that the older fathers of the house remonstrated with him. They were surprised he did not scruple to importune the superiors, of whom he was ever asking permission to inflict some new penance upon himself. He replied that he had an inward feeling, pressing him to do so; that he felt sure it was the will of God, and thus there could be no wrong in it.

However, he admitted that sometimes he asked for things which he knew would be refused him; but he did this that he might suffer the humiliation of a rebuke.

One day, being asked why it was he would not take the counsel of aged and pious fathers, who advised him to relax his penances and mortifications, he replied: "The persons who give me this advice are of two sorts; some lead such holy and perfect lives that I can discern nothing in them but what is worthy of imitation, and I have more than once determined to abide by their counsels, but when I noted that they themselves did not observe them in their own conduct, I judged it better to imitate their actions than to follow the recommendations, which through a certain charitable feeling and compassionate affection they gave me. Others there are, who themselves do not follow the advice which they give me, and are not much addicted to penitential exercises; but I consider it better to rule myself by the example of the former than by the counsel of the latter."

And he added that human nature left to itself, gradually grows callous, especially in religious matters, and

that he doubted whether without this grace he could make any headway in his spiritual life. "I am a crooked piece of iron," he said, "and am come into religion to be made straight by the hammer of mortification and penance." When someone interposing said that perfection consisted in interior goodness and that to bring about this end, it was better to scourge the will than the body, he replied: "Yes, these things must be done, but the others must not be left undone." He remembered the other saints of the order who had lived before him; he remembered the way in which its saintly founder, St. Ignatius, scourged and lacerated his body; he remembered what he said in the constitutions of the Society, that he did not command vigils, fasts, special prayers, and disciplines, to his religious, because he supposed them to be already so perfect and so much given to these things as to need rather the curb than the spur.

From this, however, it must not be supposed that because he disregarded the advice and counsels of old and

pious men he was ever disobedient. Far from it, to all to whom he owed obedience, to his superiors, he was most docile. Their every will he executed in the minutest detail, and never did his exceedingly scrupulous conscience have a single fear on this point.

Aloysius loved to tend the sick. It was one of his ways of fulfilling God's great commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself." It was his great pleasure to visit the hospitals; and not satisfied with merely talking with the sick, comforting them with words, he made their beds, washed them, and attended to their other temporal wants. He also received, from the superior, permission to visit all the sick in the college once a day. Here all alike felt his kind influence. His coming was the approach of the sunlight; his treatment gentle as a mother's.

With all this work on his hands, besides his studies, one would think he had enough to keep his mind engaged all day. But it was not so. He still prayed as much as when in the novitiate, and even found

time to consider and bring to light an additional way of offering God honor and praise.

Though Aloysius, from his childhood, had always avoided conversations on any topic save eternity and the things of eternity, he noticed that during recreation the other young scholastics and novices were inclined to converse on temporal matters. This grieved him. He wondered whether he could not bring about a change. The more he thought about it, the better satisfied he was, that with the assistance of God's grace and a little perseverance on his own part, his wishes could be accomplished. He spoke to the rector as to whether he favored the idea of diverting attention from all conversations on indifferent topics during recreation. Having received his consent he at once set to work. He first consulted Father Ubaldini, prefect of spiritual things, a very holy man, and begged his prayers for the work. Then he consulted five or six of his fellow scholastics whom he knew were spiritually fitted to enable him to carry on the design to a successful end.

They began by meeting now and then, during recreation to talk about sacred things. That this meeting might be all the more interesting, and not to be at a loss for a topic, Aloysius used to spend daily a half hour, in reading some spiritual book. After a while these conferences became more general, and the following plan was carried out by these holy workers. If they happened to be speaking to inferiors, they at once introduced some religious subject and talked about it. If, however, they were talking to superiors, they pursued another course. Like children anxious to learn, they professed ignorance on some question and asked for explanations. In this way a change gradually took place and the designs of Aloysius began to ripen.

Another plan of the young saint was to win over every new novice that entered the college, and wean him, at the very beginning, from all worldly conversations, so that in a short time he became one of his most powerful helpers.

It can easily be imagined, that in a place where many were zealously working for the same end, worthy of the highest sanction of God; where all were devoting themselves to the greater honor and glory of God, an object such as this must have had gratifying results. And so it had. In a short while a decided change came over the whole house. The spirit of love for divine things, which burned so brightly in the heart of Aloysius, was kindled in the hearts of all.

Heaven seemed to have come down on earth to rest in that little domain. God was their all. They were consumed with the desire to have Him with them at all times. And all this was the work of the saintly Aloysius. Who can estimate the good he did in this work? Who can tell the blessings which God showered down upon the young religious, so filled with divine love? God alone knows what these young men did, when, in after life they went forth to teach and to preach, consecrated to God, strengthened by the divine gift of ordination, stamped with the seal of God's love,

which must have shone with a bright flame on their countenances, and cast a brilliant radiance over all who came within its influence. Who can tell the many wanderers brought back to the fold, even after their saintly leader Aloysius had passed away from the world.

From the time Aloysius entered religious life till he entered Heaven, once only did he emerge and visit the scenes of his childhood, and then it was to settle the affairs of his relatives.

The occasion was this: Orazio Gonzaga, lord of Solferino, had died and in his will deeded the estate to Duke William, of Mantua. This will was void, because Solferino was a free Imperial Fief, and hence Orazio had not the power to will it away. Ralph, brother of Aloysius, claimed the property as his, because Louis, the grandfather of both Orazio and Ralph, and the original owner of the estate, had decreed that in the event of Orazio having no male heirs, it was to revert to the marquisate.

Thus, rightly the property belonged to Aloysius. Aloysius, however, when he renounced the world, had legally deeded to Ralph all his claims, titles and estates, and thus Ralph was the legal owner of the estate. William, however, seized the estate by force. He did not hold it long, however, for he died before a settlement could be made. Vincent, his son, who succeeded him, maintained the claim until, finally, the Imperial power took the case in hand and gave the estate to Ralph.

This decision caused great dissension among the relations of Aloysius. Stories were circulated and exaggerated till fear was entertained of open warfare. All efforts at reconciliation had been tried and had failed. In this crisis it occurred to the mothers of Ralph and Vincent to send for Aloysius, feeling sure that he could bring about better feelings. Aloysius declined, but fearing that he was not altogether able to judge for himself, he spoke to his confessor, Father Bellarmin, about it, and asked his advice. The latter

after some meditation and prayer, replied: "Go, Aloysius, it will be for the glory of God."

The saint received this advice as if it were from God, and prepared to set out on his journey. Though its object must have been unpleasant to Aloysius, he never uttered a word of complaint. His mission was wholly successful.

It was as an angel's visit to Castiglione. By his mere presence he seemed to extinguish the hatred and ill-will that burned in the breast of each, and by a word, united them in the bonds of friendship. He overcame every difficulty, calmed every trouble; he extended his hand over the angry waters of dissension, and peace came upon them.

While at Castiglione, Aloysius occasionally paid a visit to one of the houses of the Society, which was in the vicinity. Wherever he went, the fathers were struck with the remarkable piety of the youth; they saw in him the counterpart of St. Charles Borromeo. Fr. Prospero Malacotta, whom St. Ignatius himself had

received into the order, so admired the matured sanctity of Aloysius, that he bade him, when parting, to deliver an exhortation to the fathers of the college. Though it was quite an honor to be selected for this duty, one which none but priests ever before performed, had not obedience compelled Aloysius to do the task, he would have shrunk from it.

His subject was "Fraternal Charity," and his text: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." John xv., 12. His words were as the words of God, and filled all with consolation.

Aloysius having accomplished all he had set out to perform, thanking God for his mercy and goodness, bade his relations adieu forever and returned to Milan. Shortly after his return he wrote the following letter to his brother, a letter applicable not only to Ralph but one well worthy of study and practice by every young man who has in his heart the wish to serve and please God.

MY MOST DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

The desire I have ever had for your spiritual welfare and the consolation you have lately afforded me at Castiglione, moves me to suggest to you, according as the Lord shall inspire, what appears to me most useful for your soul. And therefore I recommend to you during the remainder of the Lenten season to prepare yourself for a general confession at Easter, or at least a confession which shall include the time elapsed since the one I know you made at Mantua five years ago.

Thus you will render certain, as far as possible in this present life, that none of the offenses—of which you have been guilty against the Divine Majesty and which, possibly, you may have omitted in confessions which you made during the period, when, from human respect, you did not dare to show yourself the servant of Christ—shall remain in you.

This, I believe, will be the more easy to you, because the difficulties you have already surmounted no longer

stand in the way; and there is left only the fruit of hope, and the sure pledge of possessing God's grace. My dear brother, I recommend this to you very earnestly.

Regarding the preservation of this grace, although it is the Lord who has been pleased to move your heart, rather than my words of kindness, as also it is He who must instruct and guide you, nevertheless, to satisfy those claims of relationship which bind me to you, and to co-operate as I have hitherto done, with the Providence of the same Lord, I propose to you two means in particular which occur to me. The one is to entertain such unlimited esteem for the grace of God, as cannot be expressed in words; neither is it possible for anyone, save God alone, to make you fully comprehend it; to Him, therefore, I leave it to teach you this.

I shall say only that, inasmuch as God's grace surpasses all created things, honors and possessions, and all else whatsoever, so, in the like measure, ought our

inward esteem of His Divine Majesty, to surpass everything else. The second means is to act conformably to this grace; "Providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men." Rom. xii., 17.

Regarding our Blessed Lord, I will here remind you again of what I recommended to you when I last saw you, concerning His worship and service. And since the recommending of the virtue of religion, which we owe to God, seems to belong particularly to religious, I will give some particulars which you can put in practice, according to the measure of grace which the Lord shall give to you.

Among these, one is that you should commend yourself to the Lord every morning, making use of the Daily Exercise, or other prayers, during which you might meditate on some of the points at the end of this little work, I send you, compiled by direction of our late friend, Cardinal Borromeo; and as you will there meet with suggestions which you, yourself, can

read, I will not enlarge on this subject any further. Only I would remind you, besides, to hear mass, according to the agreement between us.

Moreover, I would not have you lie down to rest at night without having examined your conscience, so that if you should have any mortal sin on your soul—may the Lord preserve you from it—you may as soon as possible efface it by means of penance. Bear in mind that this is necessary whenever you have anything to repent of; never wait for a specific time, such as Easter, for no one can assure you that you will then be alive.

Next, regarding the providing of good things before men, I recommend to you the observance of the respect which you owe to your relations and superiors; upon which, however, I shall say nothing, knowing you have this so much at heart, only, from my own personal obligation, and not from any idea that you need to be reminded thereof, I recommend to your tenderest care and devotion your dear mother.

Moreover, as the head of your brethren, you know how much it behooves you, both to have them united to you and to behave in such a manner towards them, as to make this union dear to them.

As to your vassals, I simply observe that God has perhaps given them unto your charge in a special and peculiar manner, solely to signify to you the special and spiritual care which you ought to have of them, and recognizing that the treatment of God towards you, should be a pattern of your treatment towards them.

For the rest, I hope that God will lead you in the way of eternal life; for the attaining of which, with you and others, I have embraced my present state of life. Meanwhile, for the confession that I spoke of at the beginning, I propose to you for your spiritual father, a father of our Society, who, from the obligations of our order, is well versed in these matters.

If you go to Mantua, I strongly recommend to you Father Matha for the office. He was the confessor of our friend Duke William. But should you not leave

Castiglione, I have already made arrangements with the Father Rector of Brescia, whereby he will speedily provide you with a confessor whenever you ask for one.

Herewith, I conclude, and as the execution of what I here recommend to you, must be the work of Divine grace, more than of your own efforts and my exhortations, I offer and promise ever to recommend you in my prayers, such as they are, to His Divine Majesty; and may He preserve and guide you to that happy end to which His elect shall attain.

Your brother in the Lord,

ALOYSIUS GONZAGA,

of the Society of Jesus.

MILAN, March 17th, 1590.

Aloysius had now dismissed all worldly cares from his mind and applied himself once more to the study and practice of what would bring him nearer to God.

He added to the mortifications he formerly inflicted on himself the deepest humiliations; he meditated and prayed, and in all seemed to be trying to make up for the time he lost while traveling and settling outside affairs. It was about this time that the angel appeared to him and announced the approach of death. Great indeed was his joy: the highest hope, the greatest desire of his pure soul was to be obtained—he was soon to be united to God forever.

Though he made known to no one the angel's visit to him, and though he undoubtedly tried to conceal any signs of unusual happiness, still we can believe with certainty that his companions thought something wonderful had happened to him, from the fact that his constancy in prayer and his utter oblivion of all surroundings during his meditations, caused an examination to be made regarding his vocation. And the special test made by the learned Fr. Achilles Gagliardi, was to find out whether Aloysius had a special supernatural gift of prayer and whether

this love of prayer in him was an obstacle to the active life.

The test proved, to the entire satisfaction of Father Gagliardi, that Aloysius had the rare gift of uniting the contemplative and active lives without the slightest injury to either.

Aloysius, knowing that he was soon to die, had but one desire, and that was to return to Rome, for as he himself tells us, if he had a home at all on earth it was at Rome, where he had first lived in Christ. He felt that it was there he wished to die, and though great, indeed, was his desire to return to Rome, still out of a wish to appear perfectly unconcerned as to his place of abode, he mentioned it to no one except to one of the Fathers, and to him only that he might pray to God to find out His wishes.

God heard his prayers and favored the young saint's desire; for about this time the Rector of the Roman College, Father Rossignoli, begged the Father General to recall Aloysius to Rome because his life and actions

were such a source of edification to the other young men. Accordingly the Father General ordered Aloysius to set out for Rome. He started on his journey in May, 1590, accompanied by several Fathers of the Society.

One afternoon, soon after they started, they came to a stream which had been swollen by a sudden rain-storm. They did not know what to do, there was no way of getting around it, for it was utterly impassable. A short time before, eighteen persons who had attempted to cross had been drowned.

While the others were deliberating, Aloysius was on his knees praying. Suddenly he looked up and a little distance away saw a youth crossing and re-crossing the turbulent stream as if it were but a little brook. Aloysius jumped up and pointing to the spot where he had seen the youth said: "There is the ford."

Whereupon they proceeded to the spot and crossed, with forty other people, without any difficulty whatever. Upon looking around for the mysterious guide he could not be found, and Father Mastrilli, companion

of Aloysius, said that it must have been an angel who made the ford that the young saint might pass. When Aloysius arrived at Rome among the first words he spoke were the following to Father Cepari: "I have buried my dead and need think no more of them; it is time for us to prepare for another life."

From that time he seems to have almost forgotten that he lived on earth. He desired to rid himself of everything that might in any way serve to remind him of earth, and so gave what he cherished most, his spiritual and theological writings, to the Rector, saying that he wished to be freed from everything.

He lived as in a long, continued ecstasy. He prayed constantly, and seemed to forget altogether even his desire to hide his sanctity, for so wrapt up in God was he, that even during recreation he was seen to fall on his knees and remain there in prayer, absolutely forgetful of his surroundings.

In his walks up and down the garden, priests and scholastics occasionally passed beside him and in front

of him, saluted him, and in other ways tried to distract him, but all in vain; he never saw or noticed them.

As time went on, Aloysius' abstraction increased, as did the reverence in which he was held by those who knew him. We are told that one celebrated preacher had such reverence for the young saint that he could never muster up enough courage to speak to him, though he had very many opportunities and very greatly desired it.

We have now followed our beautiful patron through twenty-two years of his saintly life. We have seen him, a young noble, rich and honored, renounce the world and all it holds dear, to embrace a life of mortification, poverty and prayer. We have seen him a novice in the Society of Jesus, a model and an example for the young religious the world over. We have seen him a scholastic, inspired with a supernatural knowledge of divine things, teaching alike by his example and his words, children and grown people, priests and

bishops. But here we pause, and leave for another chapter the final acts of a holy life sealed with the stamp of God's love by a glorious death.

Chapter VI.

DEATH OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

IF in his life St. Aloysius was an example of how a good Christian ought to live, no less in his death has he shown us how a true Christian should die. His was a noble death, though not at the hands of the executioner.

It is true, he was not a martyr. No torturer racked his limbs or tore his flesh; nevertheless, he suffered the keenest torments for the love of Jesus Christ.

He had always been delicate. Even when a boy he had been troubled with weak lungs, and when he entered the Society of Jesus his constitution was very much enfeebled. In vain was he sent from one place to

another in the hope that the change would benefit him. It was God's will to take him to Himself early in life.

For many years he had been troubled with a constant headache. Troubled, we said, but to Saint Aloysius it was no trouble, rather a most convenient means of mortification. He did not desire to remedy this headache; on the contrary he would secretly dispose of medicines given him for his relief, while he tried by all legitimate means to aggravate the mere pain when he had discovered that it would do him no real injury.

This he did that he might have a perpetual reminder of what his Lord had suffered for him. After he joined the Society, Aloysius began to long for death, that he might be more intimately united with Christ.

At Milan, one morning, about a year before his death, while making his daily meditation, it was revealed to him that soon his desire would be fulfilled. As we may suppose, he was overjoyed at this welcome news; but he kept it secret from all except Father

Vincent Bruno, until he returned to Rome, where he communicated it to a chosen few, and then began to prepare himself for the end.

If such a thing were possible, he turned his thoughts heavenward more than ever before. He firmly believed he had a true revelation, and was determined to be prepared for the happy moment of his death.

All his conversations, of whatever kind, he was sure to turn to God. He did not think it wrong to speak of earthly subjects, but considered heaven a far more profitable one and more suitable to his tastes.

He was whole-souled in his desire to be detached from all earthly things. In fact, he kept nothing that was not absolutely indispensable. He slept in what was in reality a store-room. There was a bed, a wooden chair, a kneeling stool, which he also used as a writing-desk. For books he had a copy of the Scriptures and the works of St. Thomas, until he heard that some less fortunate companion was seeking the latter, upon which he immediately made it over to him.

A few months before his death he began to long more and more for its speedy approach, alleging that while now he had some reason for hoping in God's mercy, so great were the responsibilities of later life, that he feared he might not be able to bear them, and thus might imperil his soul. During the plague he earnestly sought his superiors to allow him to tend the sick.

They were reluctant to grant the privilege to one so delicate, but finally yielded to his entreaties. They might well hesitate, for shortly, the disease spread among the young Jesuits, and a very dear friend of Aloysius, Tiberius Bondi, was the first to be carried off. "O how willingly," cried Aloysius, "would I change places with Tiberius and die in his stead, if God our Lord would grant me this favor."

It seemed that his prayer was heard, for on the third of March, he himself was stricken. The immediate cause of his infection is said to have been his carrying to the hospital, on his back, a poor wretch whom he picked up in the streets, in the last stages of the disease.

To this person he ministered with the most devoted care, and as a reward carried off the deadly germs of the malady. He took to his bed and thought he would now surely die, and greatly rejoiced; but to his joy succeeded fear lest his desire for death were inordinate.

However, he was assured by his confessor that it was not an unusual grace to wish for death in order to be united with God, for many saints had such desires.

His illness rapidly increased, till on the seventh day it was thought that the end had come. He received the Viaticum and Extreme Unction at the hands of the Rector, F. Bernard Rossignoli, devoutly making the responses to the prayers himself. Then he addressed all present, and to some, who had often complained that he had inflicted excessive austerities on himself and that he would repent of it on his death-bed, he said that he had for them not the slightest feelings of remorse.

Furthermore he asked the Provincial to allow him to discipline himself. Upon being told he was too weak,

he asked F. Francis Belmisseri to beat him from head to foot. This was also denied him, and as a last request he desired to be laid on the floor to die. Even this was refused.

Though all expected his death immediately, he still lingered, for the disease had left its mark, and the violent attack was followed by a slow hectic fever. For three long months he lingered on, growing weaker daily, his devotion ever increasing. He noticed some old curtains around his bed, while his fellow sufferers in the infirmary had none. He desired them to be removed, saying it was against poverty to have more than his companions, and he was satisfied only on being assured that they were placed there for a former occupant, and were in no way contrary to the spirit of poverty. When he was offered something to allay the violence of his cough, he put it aside. Again when the doctor ordered to him and another invalid bitter draughts, the latter disposed of his quickly, while Aloysius sipped his slowly as if it were delicious.

In such small things as these, it was, that he showed his perfection of self denial. In his conversation he dwelt entirely on God and heavenly things, nor did he allow himself to be distracted for a moment. On these matters he conversed with others, but as soon as the subject changed he retired within himself and gave himself up to contemplation. It was thought a great favor to see him and speak with him. His kinsmen the Cardinals Della Rovere and Scipio Gonzaga frequently visited him and derived the greatest edification from his presence and conversation.

When told they would be notified of Aloysius' condition regularly, they said that they preferred to come to him themselves. Meanwhile he was losing strength more and more, till he could hardly drag himself from his bed. Nevertheless, he frequently insisted upon getting up and tottering to a table on which stood a crucifix. This he would reverently kiss, then make the round of some pictures of saints on the wall, which he called his stations. He would kiss them and pray

before them and would not allow the infirmarian to bring them to his bed.

Sometimes when no one was near he would leave the bed and throw himself upon the floor to pray. Once the infirmarian came into the room softly, and there beheld Aloysius on his knees on the floor. Like a child caught in the act of wrong-doing, he most humbly begged pardon of the brother and promised never to do it again.

A very affecting incident was his leave-taking with Father Corbinelli. This was the old priest, whom he had so long and carefully tended. Both were now dying, and neither could go to see the other, so they sent daily greetings. But this was not sufficient, for on the eighth day before his death, the father requested to be allowed to see Aloysius for the last time.

Upon hearing this, Aloysius instantly begged the infirmarian to dress him and carry him in. This was done, and the mutual joy of the two dying religious was beautiful to behold.

They talked of the heavenly home to which they were both shortly going, exhorted each other to bear sufferings patiently and begged for each other's prayers. Finally, when Aloysius was about to leave, the aged priest begged his blessing. Of course Saint Aloysius was frightened at this proposal, and protested that it was by no means fitting for him, a mere scholastic, so young and unworthy, to presume to bless a priest. On the contrary, it was the part of the other, as a priest and the older person, to give the blessing.

Nevertheless Father Corbinelli persisted in his request and bade the infirmarian not to move Aloysius till he had complied. He felt he was in the presence of a saint, far superior to himself in spiritual perfection. The infirmarian added his voice to that of the Father, till at last Aloysius yielded to their solicitations, endeavoring at the same time to co-ordinate his aged friend's requests and his own sense of humility.

So, taking holy water and signing himself and the priest with the sign of the cross, he said: "My father

may God, ever Blessed, bless us both, and fufill your holy desires; pray for me, and I will pray for you." Aloysius was carried away and shortly after this the father died. They wished to keep the news from the saint, but it was impossible. On the night of his death he appeared thrice to Aloysius in a dream, the first time to tell him that he was in his agony, the second to beg Aloysius' prayers to help him to bear his terrible sufferings, and the third time to say that he was dead.

So vivid was the impression that the saint was unable to sleep any more that night. He afterwards said to Father Bellarmin that Father Corbinelli had but passed through purgatory; and so confidently did he assert it that it was taken as undoubted truth. More than once his friends exhorted him to pray for his own recovery, knowing full well the power of his prayers. But he firmly refused, answering in the words of Saint Paul, he would prefer to pray for his immediate death, so anxious was he to reach his eternal home.

So far did he carry this desire that he feared to be detained in purgatory for it. Once he asked his confessor, Father Bellarmin, if he thought anyone ever went directly to heaven. That father replied that he firmly thought so, and furthermore was certain Aloysius would. On hearing this the saint fell into an ecstasy, in which he remained all night, although as he afterwards said, it seemed to him but one moment. In the morning he announced that he would die in eight days—on the octave of Corpus Christi.

His belief was strengthened by Father Vincent Bruno, who told him he could not live more than a few days. On receiving this intelligence his joy was inexpressible. "Have you heard the good news that I received? I am to die in a week's time," he said to Father Bellarmin. "Pray join with me in saying a Te Deum to thank God for the great favor he has granted me." Soon after another priest entered: "My father," he cried, "we go, rejoicing; we go rejoicing."

He was so sure of his approaching death that every

day he called Father Guelfucci to him, had him close the door, place the crucifix on the table and then they recited the Penitential Psalms with great devotion.

In his other religious exercises he was, if possible, more assiduous than ever; as he knew how short his time was. Besides his meditations and prayers, he had many books on eternal life and spiritual things read to him; St. Augustine's soliloquies, St. Bernard on the Canticles, and certain psalms were his favorites.

He was unwilling to take any medicines to relieve his pain, for fear that the long wished for day might be postponed. The rumor spread that he had but a few days to live and many came to visit him, and gave him messages to deliver when he should get to Heaven. He accepted them all with such child-like simplicity and confidence, that we well might think him presumptuous, if we did not know his character and virtues.

On the third day before his death, Father Guelfucci presented him with an indulgenced crucifix, and this he kept on his bosom till he died. Thus the last days

of the saint passed in almost continual contemplation and prayer, till finally the day dawned which he had prophesied would be his last.

Early in the morning Bernard Mizzetti entered the room and addressed Aloysius: "See, Brother Aloysius, we have reached the octave of Corpus Christi, and on this day you said you were going to die; still we have hope that you will live."

And, indeed, it seemed as if Aloysius were to prove a false prophet, for he seemed stronger and brighter than usual. However, he simply answered; "The day is not yet finished to-day I shall die."

Mizzetti called the head infirmarian, and he, after examining the condition of the dying saint, said to him: "Believe me, Aloysius, you are better." He rejoined, "You think I am better, nevertheless, according to the will of God, I shall die this evening." Then he requested the Viaticum to be given him, but the infirmarian did not deem it necessary.

When the other members of the house visited him,

they found his condition so much improved that some even suggested that he be sent to Frascati; but happily this advice was not taken. He still kept begging for the Viaticum, but was refused as gently as possible. He then requested to be laid on a straw mat, and to be allowed to die on the floor, and even desired to discipline himself. As we may suppose, these requests were again denied him.

Towards evening a great solace was given to Aloysius. The Pope sent him his blessing with a plenary indulgence. Aloysius was overjoyed at this great favor, but he was covered with confusion to think that one so insignificant should be remembered by the head of the Church.

So earnest were the entreaties of Aloysius that at last the Rector, Father Rossignoli yielded and promised to bring him what he so earnestly desired, the Viaticum. Aloysius was filled with the liveliest gratitude for this favor and warmly thanked the father Rector.

All who were in the house followed the Blessed Sacrament to the infirmary, and knelt around while it was administered to their dying brother. They were moved to tears, while Aloysius expressed no emotion except the greatest joy and devotion, mingled with the desire of seeing Him in His glory, whom he now saw under a veil. Then he lovingly embraced all present, bidding them a tender farewell, begging their prayers, while he promised to remember them in the presence of his Lord.

So certain was he of going to Heaven shortly, that when the Provincial said to him, "Well, Brother Aloysius, how is it with you now?" He replied, "Going, Father." "Whither?" "To Heaven." "How so to Heaven?" "If my sins do not offer a hindrance, I leave by the mercy of God to go there."

A little later he showed once more his desire to imitate as closely as possible the death of Christ. Father Cepari had placed on the bed a crucifix, indulgenced

for the moment of his death, and was supporting him so that he might keep his eyes fixed upon it. Although he was so sure of his approaching end, nevertheless, those around him could not believe that it was so near.

Accordingly all left the room except Fathers Guelfucci and Fabrini. Father Bellarmin also stayed a short time, until he had recited the prayer of the dying, then he too, departed. The others busied themselves about the room, or knelt in prayer, while Aloysius lay in contemplation, now and then murmuring: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," or the holy name of Jesus.

Two or three times Father Guelfucci asked if he could do anything for him. The answer was: "Watch with me and assist me, for I shall die." About midnight the father went to him once more, and then it was that Aloysius asked to be changed from one side to the other, as the pain from the bedsores was growing insupportable.

It was noticed that the pallor of death was coming upon his countenance, and that large beads of sweat stood out on his brow. The fathers saw that the hand of death was at last upon him and they whispered words of encouragement to bear his sufferings in remembrance of the sufferings of Christ.

Then his countenance lighted up and showed that he understood. Fixing his eyes upon the crucifix before him, he grasped with one hand that which lay upon his bosom, while with the other he held a blessed candle, then striving to murmur the holy name of Jesus, he breathed out his pure soul into a better world.

Thus departed in peace and calm this great saint on the octave of Corpus Christi, on the night between the twentieth and twenty-first of June, fifteen hundred and ninety-one. He had reached the age of twenty-three years, three months and eleven days; of which five years and seven months had been spent as a member of the Society of Jesus.

Almost a boy in years, he had attained to mature holiness; it was the end of a life short in time but long and well spent in virtue.

It has already been said that Aloysius suffered torments at his death. This is literally true. For when the brothers came to arrange the body for burial they found on it many sores, resulting from three months' continual lying in bed, while on his side were two great wounds, of which he had not made the slightest mention.

Though they must have caused him exquisite torture, he never complained or gave signs of uneasiness till shortly before death—and then only for a moment.

So Aloysius died, not in the palace of his ancestors, but on a hard couch, almost alone, unknown save by the few with whom his last years were spent.

He might have chosen to die on a rich bed, surrounded by gentle, loving attendants, and everything that could make easy the passage from one world to another. Or he might have fallen gloriously on the

battle-field, at the head of a victorious legion, fighting for his country and for fame.

But would this have been of lasting benefit? His name might have been written in letters of gold on the pages of history, and spoken of as all that denoted glory and honor. Yet what would this avail, since he might have been

"Cut off even in the blossoms of his sin,"

and so have paid for a few years of earthly pleasure, an eternity of hopeless mourning.

How short is the time of this glory on earth considering all that is forfeited to gain it. For a few short years his name would have been lauded to the skies, he would then have died from the memory of man, till finally none would know of him except as a fleeting glory in the records of the past.

This is the result of the soldier's efforts. On the contrary, see what was the real outcome of his mode of life. A few years he toiled and suffered for an end. And was that end fame? Ah, no; it was something

incomparably greater than mere worldly honor! It was not a short span of years of human glory, glory of no profit to the immortal soul, it was for the everlasting glory of the joys of Heaven.

The ancients of a more philosophic turn of mind well recognized the emptiness of earthly glory, often without seeing the higher state. They saw around them every day, men striving for an olive crown and a name, and then content to die. Socrates, Plato, and Juvenal appreciated the foolishness of such conduct. The last of these wrote: "Weigh Hannibal. How many pounds will you find in that great leader, whom all Africa could not contain?"

The mind of Aloysius, young in years but old in wisdom, when it came to the meeting of the roads that ran to fame or to Heaven, well chose the path that led to Heaven; but in choosing that, it proved, even to him, the path of undying fame, with a nobler record than was ever won by worldly hero, be he patriot, king, or soldier.

Chapter VII.

THE HONOR TO HIS MEMORY AND MIRACLES.

ALOYSIUS had lived a hidden life; he had filled none of those external occupations that could have made known his sanctity to the world, and yet immediately after his death it was God's will that the sweet perfume of his heroic virtues should be spread throughout the earth.

The pious marchioness, his mother, received from every quarter numberless assurances of the high esteem in which her beloved son was held. Fr. Claudius Aquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus, writing to her, says: "Henceforth Your Excellency has a dear and faithful intercessor in Heaven, where his blessed

soul, as we believe, has already entered." This was the opinion held by many other persons in Rome, among others by the Rector of the Roman College, Cardinal Scipio de Gonzaga, and Cardinal della Rovere.

So universal, indeed, was the idea held of his sanctity that on the day of his burial, as is declared by Thomas Mancini, Secretary of the Cardinal della Rovere, the people gathered in great crowds to obtain some portion of his relics, and many noblemen were most eager in their endeavors to secure some slight souvenir of the saint.

In the Courts of Florence, of Ferrara, of Turin, of Parma, he was at once invoked as a saint, and of the many royal personages who bore testimony to his sanctity those loudest in his praise were Rudolph II., Emperor of Austria; Charles Emanuel I., Duke of Savoy; Maria de Medicis, Queen of France; Philip III., King of Spain; and Margaret of Austria.

Still more significant, however, is the opinion of the Cardinal Bellarmin. In such high esteem did he hold

the holy youth that on each recurring anniversary of the saint's death the venerable old man might be seen kneeling at the tomb of his former penitent while tears of consolation coursed down his cheeks, as he recalled the last farewell of his dear son and the sweet converse they had held together.

In an exhortation addressed to the Community in the Roman College he declared that when giving the Exercises of St. Ignatius to Aloysius, he found him filled with such an abundance of light on spiritual things that he, old man though he was, was taught by him the art of meditation.

Shortly after, writing to Fr. Cepari, he said: "I believe that he entered at once into the glory of the Blessed," and when he himself was on the point of rejoining his young friend, his last request was that his body might be buried at the feet of his spiritual child.

But, as if in confirmation of all these testimonies of holy and distinguished men, the Heavens themselves open to reveal the glory of the saint.

In 1590, Fr. Virgil Cepari was Rector of the College at Florence and Confessor at the Monastery of Santa Maria de los Angelos, where Mary Magdalen de Pazzi then lived as Mother Superioress. He gave the Community a relic of Aloysius, a bone of one of the fingers. On the 4th of April, 1591, the Mother was distributing fragments of the relic to the Religious assembled about her, when she was wrapt in ecstasy.

She saw Aloysius in glory, and as was her wont in her visions, she uttered aloud what she saw. One of the Nuns noted down her words: "O, how great is the glory of Aloysius, the young son of Ignatius! Can there be greater glory in Heaven than that which Aloysius possesses? I declare that Aloysius is a great saint. Would that I could traverse the whole earth to proclaim it everywhere to God's greater glory! Who could imagine the merit and the price of an interior life! Aloysius was a hidden martyr. Oh how great was his love of God while on earth! For this reason does he now possess his God in the fullness of divine love."

When, in the year 1601, this writing was shown to her by the Archbishop of Florence, Alexander de Medicis, she assured him on oath, that she had seen in vision what was there narrated.

The sanctity of Aloysius was further attested by the many miracles he has wrought. In 1593, two years after his death, he appeared in glory to his mother and cured her of a dangerous illness. Camilla Ferrari, who had known Aloysius in his infancy, was at the point of death when on invoking the saint she was instantly cured. The authenticity of this miracle was recognized by the Tribunal of the Rota.

In Castiglione twelve lamps and four hundred ex-votos were hung in testimony of the favors he had obtained for his own people.

In Florence, the Archbishop of that place counted in 1753, fifty-eight miracles wrought by the saint. One of the most remarkable of these was the sudden restoration to health of Julia de Nobili, wife of the Senator Paul Virita, secretary of the Grand Duke

Ferdinand of Tuscany. She was carried in a dying condition to the Church of the Society, and after repeating three times a prayer to St. Aloysius she was cured and returned on foot to her own home.

The holy Aloysius seemed to have a special care for his beloved brethren in religion. Joseph Spinelli, a young scholastic, was studying philosophy at the College of Palmero in 1635. He was struck with paralysis. He prayed to St. Aloysius and the saint appeared to him and cured him instantly. In 1765 another scholastic, Louis Celestini, studying rhetoric at the Novitiate of San Andrea, was cured of a mortal illness through the intercession of our saint.

Pope Benedict XIII. named Aloysius as the special patron of youth and particularly of students. It is not surprising, therefore, if the gentle saint has always reserved for students the greatest portion of his favors. Besides the miracles already spoken of, there remain many things to say that will show to young people by what obligations they are bound to this kind

protector, and how great is the confidence they should have in his intercession.

In the year 1605 there lived in the Roman College a boy of noble family, and of angelic piety. But his mind was so dull that he could learn nothing. Hence, however much he labored, he never made any progress in his studies, scarcely understanding a word of what was said in class, becoming on this account a source of much amusement to his comrades. One day as he left the class-room, covered with shame and more dejected than ever, he ran all bathed in tears to the tomb of St. Aloysius, poured out to him his grief, and begged of the saint to obtain for him that he might cease to be but a useless block of wood unable to respond to the care of his teacher. He was heard, and so effectually, that he was able to hang at the altar of the saint the following *ex-voto:*

"Ex-voto: On account of my dullness I have hitherto been the last in my class. I had recourse to St. Aloysius and implored his help at his tomb. Scarcely

had ten days passed before I felt my mind illumined by a new light and I have since been enabled, as my teacher assures me, to continue my studies with profit."

In 1700, a little boy who studied at the college of the Society of Jesus at Innsbrück, had his face and hands severely burned by an explosion of powder. The wounded parts were rubbed with the oil of the lamp that burned before the tomb of St. Aloysius, and in less than a quarter of an hour the boy was cured.

Again, in 1728, a boy in one of the schools in Rome was badly injured while at play, by being struck on the head by a stone weighing three or four pounds. He fell to the ground unconscious. The prefect had him carried to a hospital near-by. As he passed by the church he stepped in and said a short prayer to St. Aloysius. He had scarcely finished when the boy recovered his senses, got up and returned to the school. The next morning all that remained of the deep wound he had received was a slight scar. This wonder was beheld by many witnesses.

But if this amiable saint is so willing to help his clients in their temporal needs what has he not done for the spiritual wants of their souls in helping them to make progress in virtue? And, indeed, it is evident that God has placed Aloysius in Heaven to be the model and the apostle of Christian youth on earth.

It would be impossible to tell all the good that has resulted during the past three hundred years from the reading of his life. The venerable Cardinal Bellarmin declared in speaking of his angelic friend: "God has been pleased to exalt his young servant that all young persons may know that youth is not an obstacle to the attainment of mature virtue, and knowing this may be animated by his example to seek after perfection."

The students of the Roman College seemed to be the especial favorites of the saint, and it is quite natural that it should be so, for during his life he himself had received his lessons in those halls, and after his death his tomb remains there as a throne of glory from which he dispenses his favors.

The venerable Father François Marle Galuzzi who for twenty years was the spiritual director of most of the students, noted down, year after year, the graces that were obtained in each triduum preparatory to the Feast of St. Aloysius.

The 21st of June was called by Father Anthony Baldinucci the "Devotional Feast," on account of the extraordinary fervor that he remarked in the students on that day as they approached the Holy Table. Father de Benedictis declared that it was a known fact that this Feast was always remarkable for the singular graces of conversion and vocation that were obtained. It may be well to narrate some of them.

A student of the Roman College was living a criminal life and had entirely given up the sacraments. A few days before the Feast of St. Aloysius, he entered the church by chance and made a visit to the Tomb of the Saint. Suddenly he feels an entire change come over his heart; he hastens to throw himself at the feet of a confessor, makes a general confession of his past

life with all the sentiments of perfect contrition, and from that day began to lead a life of piety and fervor.

Another student told his confessor as he came to confession: "I did not want to come, I felt so much repugnance and shame; but Aloysius urges me to come and it is he who brings me here by main force."

The father of a numerous family had a little boy of very frail health, who studied at the Roman College. The child hearing the life of St. Aloysius read during the triduum, was so inflamed with a desire to imitate him that he abandoned his playthings for long hours of prayer and gave up his meals for bread and water. His father and his older brothers were so touched by his example, that they embraced a life of great devotion. The house became, as it were, a monastery.

They passed much time in prayer, assembled together for meditation; until at length four of the boys embraced a religious life to the great joy of their father, who found himself thus blessed in his children.

At Lucerne, there lived a young man who gave himself up to a life of dissipation. He was counselled by a friend to have confidence in St. Aloysius, and to practice in his honor the devotions of the six Sundays. He did so, but was overcome by discouragement and fell again into his bad life. One day, while he was alone in his room, a picture of the Saint that was hanging on the wall was hurled to the floor with such a great noise, that the miserable young man, filled with fear, fell down in a swoon. On recovering, he threw himself on his knees before the picture, and from that moment was sincerely converted.

In the Roman Martyrology, the Feast of St. Aloysius, the 21st of June, is announced in these terms: "At Rome, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, celebrated for the innocence of his life and his contempt for the world," and from his abode in Heaven he has sought to infuse into the hearts of the more fervent of his servants a special love of these two virtues for which he was so remarkable.

Among the persons who in this respect have imitated more perfectly their charming model, are to be numbered his three nieces. They became the founders of a famous monastery at Castiglione, which long continued to be a source of edification and glory to all Italy. They were the three daughters of Ralph, brother of St. Aloysius, Cynthia, Olympia and Angelica. Cynthia lived at Rome, with her uncle, Francis of Gonzaga, and while there thought only of the vanities of the world.

Suddenly she fell sick, and during her sickness, which lasted for four months, she was aroused by the counsels of Fr. Cepari. She examined her life, and gradually felt a complete change come over her soul.

She thought of the great example of her uncle Aloysius, and was so filled with disgust for the vain things of the world that, after having made the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, she abandoned all that she had previously cherished, and gave herself up to a life of prayer and mortification.

Finally she resolved to consecrate her virginity to

God, and this she did on the Feast of Corpus Christi, 1606. Soon after she besought her uncle Francis to build at Castiglione a convent for those who sought perfection in religion, and a church for the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, whom she desired to direct her in the religious life.

Shortly after, Olympia, who had always led a most exemplary life in emulation of her saintly uncle, joined her sister at Castiglione. Angelica for a long time resisted the example of her sisters and continued to lead a worldly life. At length, however, owing to the counsels of Fr. Cepari and to the intercession of Aloysius, she also embraced the life of religion at the Convent of Castiglione.

It is known to God alone how many generous souls have been drawn to the way of evangelical perfection by the example of St. Aloysius. The holy youth delights to inspire others with a desire for a religious vocation, which he himself esteemed so highly and for which he fought so valiantly while on earth.

May his life be in the future what it has been to so many in the past: a light, an inspiration, a guide to lead souls from time to eternity, from earth to heaven.

APPENDIX.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM
IHS

Written for the First Century.
IMAGO PRIMI SÆCULI.

NON INFERIORA SECUTUS.

SUBLIMES aquilæ, volucrum generosa propago,
Ausæ oculis Phœbi solicitare jubar;
Et vos Gonzagæ, qui non sine numine Divum
Quatuor antiquum stemma notatis aves;
State alacres, fixasque acies intendite cœlo;
Explorare novo stemmata sole juvat.
Cernite quos ignes, radios quos spargat Jesus;
Quæ nova cœlesti lampade flamma miscet.
Caligant vultus. Oculos Aloysius unus
Figit, et obtutu mens animosa salit
Quin (adeo haud oculos hebetant nova lumina) clamat,
O! mihi, Phœbe, novas ejaculare faces.
Vivimus his, Jesuque tuo recreamur ab igne;
Eia, oculos radio jam propiore feri,
Desero, quod possum, patrem, patriamque, laremque;
Ut te sole queam sic propiore frui,
Terra vale. Genitor quid pugnas? mitte querelas.
Non te, non proavis inferiora sequor,
Invideas, frater, si credas: quosque relinquo
Discedens titulos, tu quoque ferre neges.
Me genus et stirpem juvat ipso arcessere cœlo:
Pro titulis JESUS omnibus unus erit.

Translated for the Third Century.

ST. ALOYSIUS.

LIKE eagles, noble birds of lofty flight
Who dare ascend the clear celestial height
And tempt the gleaming sun,
So you, Gonzagas of most noble line
Who boast, through pleasure of the will Divine,
Four branches old, stand firm with fixed gaze
And look to heav'n. Now, of your noble race
Appears the noblest one.

Behold what splendor Jesus spreads, what rays!
What new star glistens with a heavenly blaze?
The visage burns with love.
One, Aloysius only, fixes there
His searching eyes, and midst the steady glare
Which cannot his pure sight bedim, with heart
That sympathetic, throbs at every dart
He sends his cry above.

O cast on me thy beams, O Light Eterne,
By these we live; and, Jesus, let love burn
Within my lowly breast.
Behold! my eyes now nearer reach thy light.
All I resign: my titles and my right,
My parents loved, my home and fatherland,
That I with Thee may dwell, with Thee may stand
And aye by Thee be blest.

False earth, farewell! O father grant my plea!
What I desire is not unworthy thee
Nor any of thy hall.
Ah! brother, do not envy, but decline
To bear the honors which I now resign,
To heav'n I call and for my titles claim
But one alone, my Lord's my JESUS' name,
For that to me is all.

LEO PP. XIII.

UNIVERSIS Christifidelibus præsentes Litteras inspecturis salutem et Benedictionem Apostolicam.

Opportune quidem et auspicato contingit ut XI. kalendas iulias hoc anno sacra sollemnia in honorem Sancti **Aloisii Gonzagae** trium sæculorum a beatissimo exitu eius elapso spatio sint memori pietate peragenda. Nuntiatum Nobis est, ex faustitate huius eventus mirabili amore pietatisque studio exarsisse animos christianorum adolescentium, quibus optima sane huiusmodi occasio visa est, ut suam in cœlestem iuventutis Patronum voluntatem et reverentiam multiplici significatione testarentur. Et id quidem evenire videtur non in iis tantum regionibus quæ sanctum Aloi-

TRANSLATION OF BRIEF OF

POPE LEO XIII.

TO all the faithful, reading these letters, health and Apostolic benediction.

The twenty-first of June of the present year shall be especially distinguished as being the tercentenary of the saintly Aloysius Gonzaga.

This timely and most auspicious event shall be fittingly commemorated by religious solemnities, devoutly instituted in his honor.

Already has it been made known to us that the happiness of this occasion has enkindled within the hearts of our Catholic young men a wonderful love and burning desire of piety. And what more fitting opportunity may be presented them of showing in sundry ways the heaven-born affection and reverence felt by all towards this celestial patron of youth?

These pious and reverential feelings have been manifested not in those parts only which were favored by the life and death of the Saint, but burn brightly, far and wide, in all places wheresoever has been heard his name or the story of his holy life.

sium terris cœloque genuere, sed late ubicumque Aloisii nomen et sanctitatis fama percrebuit. Nos iam a tenera aetate angelicum Iuvenem summo pietatis studio colere assueti, cum hæc novimus, periucundo lætitiæ sensu affecti sumus. Deo autem opitulante confidimus eiusmodi sollemnia non vacua futura fructu christianis hominibus, nominatim adolescentibus qui Patrono tutelari suo honores cum habebunt, in cogitationem facile deducentur clarissimarum virtutum quibus Ille quoad vixit ceteris in exemplum enituit. Quas quidem virtutes cum secum cogitent et admirentur, sperandum est fore ut adiuvante Deo animum mentemque suam ad eas velint informare, studeantque fieri imitatione meliores. Neque certe catholicis iuvenibus proponi potest praestantius ad imitandum exemplum illisque locupletius virtutibus quarum laude florere iuvenilem aetatem desiderari maxime solet. Ex vita enim et moribus Aloisii possunt adolescentes documenta plurima capere, unde ediscant qua cura et vigilantia vitae integritas et innocentia sit servanda, qua constantia casti-

Of a truth, unbounded has been our own joy on hearing this, for from our tenderest years we ourselves have ever striven to cherish a loving homage towards this angelic youth.

And we sincerely trust that these devotions, commemorative of his holy life, may not be vain, but rather productive of the greatest good among all Christians, but especially among the young, who, while paying their tributes of affection to their patron and guardian, will, we are confident, be led to the sweet contemplation of those virtues which made Aloysius, while on earth, a quickening example to all.

For it is confidently to be hoped that, recalling to mind his holiness of life, they will endeavor, with the divine assistance, to fashion their own lives after his, and thus make daily greater efforts to advance in the way of perfection.

And what grander example may we propose to our Catholic young men? Where find one richer in those noblest virtues which are the chief ornaments of youth? Study Aloysius's life and actions! how many lessons are not presented to the young, of the care and watchfulness necessary to preserve their own lives spotlessly pure! of the fidelity with which they should keep their bodies in due subjection and restrain the too great eagerness of their desires! Hence may they draw the

gandum corpus ad restinguendos cupiditatum ardores, quomodo despiciendæ divitiæ contemnendique honores, qua mente atque animo tum studiis vacandum tum cetera omnia ætatis suæ officia et munia implenda, quodque his præsertim temporibus maximi est momenti, qua fide quo amore sit Ecclesiæ matri et Apostolicae Sedi adhærendum. Siquidem Angelicus Adolescens seu domesticos inter parietes degeret, seu nobilis ephebus in Aula Hispanica versaretur, seu animo virtute et doctrina excolendo operam daret in Societatem Iesu abdicato principatu adscitus, ubi quod in votis habuerat et præclusum dignitatibus aditum et vitam omnem proximorum saluti sibi unice impendendam esse gestiebat, talem in omni vitae genere sese impertiit, ut facile ceteris omni laude antecelleret et praeclara relinqueret sanctitatis argumenta. Quapropter sapienti sane concilio qui christianæ iuventuti instituendæ et erudiendæ præficiuntur, sanctum Aloisium proponere solent tamquam nobilissimum ad imitandum exemplum, obsequentes consilio decessoris Nostri Benedicti

knowledge that riches are to be despised and honors spurned. Here, too, they have unfolded before them the peerless example of intense earnestness and minutest exactness in all things, whether in the pursuit of knowledge or in the exercise of the various other ordinary duties of their young life.

But pre-eminently does Aloysius stand forth in these times of change and unrest, as a shining example to all of a son filled with ardent love of Holy Church and staunch devotion towards the Apostolic See.

For consider him during those boyhood days passed beneath the parental roof; watch him as a young noble in the performance of his duties at the court of Spain; study him, when casting aside all worldly preferments, he enters the Society of Jesus, that there, cut off from every approach to dignities, he may use his utmost endeavors to become holy and learned and devote his entire life to the salvation of those around him: weigh well his every deed, and it will be plain that, truly an angelic youth he performed every action of his life with so pure a motive, as easily to excel all others in virtue, leaving to all glorious testimonials of his sanctity.

Those, then, whose duty it is to watch over the formation and education of Christian youth, very wisely present St. Aloysius as a model nobly worthy of

XIII. qui iuventuti studiis deditæ præcipuum Patronum cœlestem Aloisium constituit. Quare egregiam sane meritorum laudem sibi comparare videntur illæ catholicorum iuvenum societates, quæ non modo in italicis sed etiam in externis urbibus sunt institutæ eo proposito, ut huiusmodi Aloisiana sollemnitas singulari cultu celebretur. Nos non latet quantum studii operæque illæ contulerint in apparandis honoribus qui toto orbe catholico Angelico Iuveni deferentur et quantam adhibeant curam ut catholicorum pietate pariter ac numero præstent piæ peregrinationes vel ad natale solum Aloisii vel ad hanc almam Urbem quæ castas eius exuvias asservat et colit, suscipiendæ. Pueris etiam, ut accepimus, puellisque oblata est ratio testandi Aloisio puri amoris et pietatis suæ quasi primitias: pagellæ enim late sunt diffusæ, augustis iam Nominibus in quibus ipsi se parentesque tamquam famulos et clientes inscribant. Singulari huic in re optima ardori et sanctis eiusmodi propositis et votis cupimus atque optamus ut bonus faustusque iuvante Deo exitus obtingat. Interea

imitation; in this, prudently following the wish of our predecessor, Benedict XIII., who named the saintly Aloysius the especial heavenly patron of students.

Surely, great, indeed, is the praise merited by those young men who, not in Italy only, but also in various other parts of the world, have banded together for the purpose of taking a peculiar share in the solemnities to be held in honor of St. Aloysius.

We ourselves well know that throughout the entire Catholic world these clients of Aloysius are vying with one another in doing him honor, and with all zeal and earnestness are working that the pilgrimages made either to his native land or to this cherished city, still guarding his chaste remains, may be glowing tributes, remarkable alike for the veneration shown and the number of the faithful therein participating.

The little ones also are afforded a happy opportunity of dedicating to Aloysius the first fruits of a pure and faithful affection, for, as we have learned, far and wide are to be found albums already ennobled by the signatures of persons of the highest rank, in which may be inscribed both the names of children and those of their parents as the saint's faithful clients.

God grant that so wonderful a fervor manifested in this truly noble undertaking and so many prayers and endeavors may be productive of most happy results.

cum admotae nuper sint ad Nos preces ut in uberiorem animarum fructum cœlestibus Ecclesiæ thesauris hanc sollemnitatem ditare et decorare velimus, Nos piis hisce precibus benigne adnuendum censuimus. Quamobrem de Omnipotentis Dei misericordia ac BB. Petri et Pauli App. Eius auctoritate confisi, omnibus et singulis utriusque sexus Christifidelibus qui triduanas quotidie vel quinquies saltem novendialibus supplicationibus quæ habendæ sunt ante Aloisiana sollemnia diebus a respectivo loci Ordinario designandis, et vel ipso die festo vel uno ex dictis diebus ad cuiuscumque arbitrium sibi eligendo verè pœnitentes atque confessi ac S. Communione refecti quamlibet Ecclesiam seu Oratorium publicum, ubi festum S. Aloisii celebrabitur, devote visitaverint, ibique pro christianorum Principum concordia, hæresum extirpatione, peccatorum conversione ac S. Matris Ecclesiæ exaltatione pias ad Deum preces effuderint, Plenariam omnium peccatorum suorum Indulgentiam et remissionem misericorditer in Domino concedimus. Iis vero fidelibus qui corde saltem contriti

And that a plentiful harvest of souls may be reaped, we ourselves affectionately yield to the pious entreaties of those who have lately besought us to enrich and adorn this occasion with the treasures and graces bestowed from on high upon Holy Church.

Trusting, then, in the tender mercy of Almighty God, and in the authority of His blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, we mercifully grant in the Lord a plenary indulgence and full remission of their sins to all such as, truly penitent and having purified themselves in the Sacrament of Confession and received Holy Communion, shall visit some church or public oratory, where the Feast of St. Aloysius is celebrated, and there pray for the promotion of peace among Christian princes, the extirpation of heresies, the conversion of sinners and the exaltation of Holy Mother Church.

As a further condition, however, necessary to gain these indulgences, the faithful must pray for the above-named intentions daily during the triduum, or on five at least of the days of the novena prescribed by the Ordinary as preparatory to the Saint's festival; and they must approach the Holy Table on the feast itself, or on one of the days assigned for its solemnization.

Moreover, following the wonted practice of the Church, we grant an indulgence of seven years and seven times forty days to those of the faithful who will

pias peregrinationes ad memorata loca confecerint, et parvulis etiam pro eorum captu eorumque parentibus qui nomina ad promerendum Aloisii patrocinium inscripserint, dummodo triduanis vel novendialibus supplicationibus, ut supra dictum est, adstiterint, septem annos totidemque quadragenas in forma Ecclesiæ consueta relaxamus. Quas omnes et singulas indulgentias, peccatorum remissiones ac pœnitentiarum relaxationes etiam animabus christifidelium, quæ Deo in charitate coniunctae ab hac luce migraverint, per modum suffragii applicari posse indulgemus. Præsentibus hoc anno tantum valituris. Volumus autem ut præsentium Litterarum transumptis seu exemplis etiam impressis, manu alicuius Notarii publici subscriptis et sigillo personæ in ecclesiastica dignitate constitutæ munitis eadem prorsus fides adhibeatur, quæ adhiberetur ipsis præsentibus, si forent exhibitæ vel ostensæ. Datum Romæ apud S. Petrum sub annulo Piscatoris die 1. Ianuarii MDCCCXCI. Pontificatus nostri anno XIII.

M. Card. Ledochowski.

undertake a pilgrimage to the places made memorable by St. Aloysius.

And this indulgence we likewise extend even to the children, as far as they are capable of profiting by it, and to all parents who will have enrolled their children among those invoking the patronage of Aloysius, provided they comply with the above-named conditions of the triduum or novena.

We also grant that all and each of these indulgences, pardon of sin and remission of punishment, be applied by way of suffrages to those faithful souls who have departed this life united to God by the bond of charity.

These privileges hold good only during the present year.

We wish that the credence shown to these letters themselves, should be in like manner given to all printed copies thereof or public translations, signed by a notary public and attested by the seal of some ecclesiastical dignitary.

Given at Rome under the seal of the Fisherman's ring, January 1, 1891, in the thirteenth year of our Pontificate.

M. Cardinal Ledochowski.

TRIDUUM AND NOVENA

OF

THE TERCENTENARY

OF THE DEATH OF ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, PATRON OF YOUTH.

THE three hundredth anniversary of the death of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Patron of Youth, falls on the 21st of June of the present year. The Holy See, by a Brief dated January 1, 1891, has granted special privileges to its celebration, for the churches of the whole world.

1°. A Plenary Indulgence for the Triduum or for assisting five times at the Novena, to be gained on the Feast itself or any day of the Triduum or Novena. A visit to the church or chapel where the Feast is celebrated is required, on the usual conditions of Confession and Communion with prayers for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

2°. To Pilgrims and to the children who place themselves under the protection of St. Aloysius, and to their

parents who thus enroll them, an Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines.

All these indulgences are applicable to the Souls in Purgatory.

3°. In all the churches of the world which celebrate this Anniversary, the Mass of the Saint may be said for three days, beginning on the Feast itself.

All the privileges and Indulgences require the usual consent of the Ordinary.

A great Pilgrimage will be made to the Saint's tomb in Rome. For those who are not able to join this Pilgrimage for the 21st of June, special spiritual favors have been granted by the Holy Father, on condition that they unite in spirit with the Pilgrims and place themselves under the patronage of St. Aloysius; and parents may do this in the name of their young children.

In memory of the Tercentenary there is to be placed in the tomb of the Saint, an album containing the names of the young children whose parents consecrate them to St. Aloysius.

From the Raccolta.

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA.

Devout Exercise.

POPE CLEMENT XII., in order to inspire the faithful, and especially the young, with greater devotion toward the angelic youth, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, granted by two decrees of the S. Congr. of Indulgences, December 11th, 1739, and January 17th, 1740:

A Plenary Indulgence on each of the six Sundays which are wont to be kept in honor of this saint, either immediately before his feast, on June 21st, or at any time of the year. In order to gain this Plenary Indul-

gence, it is requisite that the six Sundays should be kept consecutively; and that on each of them, the faithful, being truly penitent, after confession and communion, should employ themselves in pious meditations or vocal prayers or other works of Christian piety, in honor of the saint.

On the Day of his Feast.

The Sovereign Pontiffs, Benedict III, by a decree, November 22d, 1729, Clement XII, by a decree November 21st, 1737, and Benedict XIV, by a decree, April 12th, 1742, granted:

A Plenary Indulgence to all the faithful who, being truly penitent, after confession and communion, shall visit an altar dedicated to St. Aloysius Gonzaga, on the day of his feast, and pray for the wants of Holy Mother Church, and for the intention of His Holiness.

This feast may be celebrated, with permission of the Ordinary, on any day of the year, in any place, at any altar, as appears from the decree cited above.

Prayer.

O Blessed Aloysius, adorned with angelic graces! I, thy most unworthy suppliant, recommend specially to thee the chastity of my soul and body, praying thee by thy angelic purity to plead for me with Jesus Christ, the immaculate lamb, and His most Holy Mother, the Virgin of virgins, that They would vouchsafe to keep me from all grievous sin. O! never let me be defiled with any stain of impurity; but when thou dost see me in temptation, or in danger of falling, then remove far from my heart all bad thoughts and unclean desires, and awaken in me the memory of my eternity to come and Jesus Crucified; impress deeply in my heart a sense of the holy fear of God; and thus, kindling in me the fire of divine love, enable me so to follow thy footsteps here on earth, that in heaven, with thee, I may be made worthy to enjoy the vision of our God forever. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

To increase more and more devotion toward St. Aloysius Gonzaga who, from the time of his canonization, was given by Benedict XIII. as the special protector of the young, the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII., by a decree of the S. Congr. of Indulgences, March 6th, 1802, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer, with one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father:

An indulgence of one hundred days, once a day.

THE SIX SUNDAYS.

"THE manner of performing the devotion of the six Sundays is as follows:

"*First*, on each of these Sundays let the person who performs this devotion choose St. Aloysius as his patron and receive the sacraments of penance, and the Holy Eucharist.

"*Second*, on that day let him be present at some sodality meeting, or at least hear a mass in honor of the saint.

"*Third*, let him recite each day either before some statue or picture of the saint, or in the church, six Our Fathers and Hail Marys, with the Glory be to the Father, the Litany of the Saint, etc.

"*Fourth*, let him perform some Work of Mercy, spiritual or corporal, according to his ability or devotion.

"*Fifth*, let him spend some time in meditating; for the subject of meditation on each Sunday, let him take one of the Virtues, which St. Bonaventure finds expressed in the wings of the Seraphim seen by the prophet Isaias. These virtues are: compunction of heart, satisfaction of penance, cleanness of body, purity of mind, love of God, and love of our neighbor. With these virtues, as with so many wings, did the angelic youth, Aloysius, fly to such a height of perfection, as to resemble, in some manner, the very angels themselves.

THE LITANY OF ST. ALOYSIUS.

LORD have mercy on us.
Christ have mercy on us.
Lord have mercy on us.
Christ hear us.
Christ graciously hear us
God the Father, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Holy Mother of God,
St. Aloysius,
Most Beloved of Christ,
The delight of the Blessed Virgin,
Most chaste Youth,
} Pray for us.

Angelic youth,
Most humble youth,
Model of young students,
Despiser of riches,
Enemy of vanities,
Scorner of honors,
Honor of princes,
Jewel of the nobility,
Flower of innocence,
Ornament of the religious state,
Mirror of mortification,
Mirror of perfect obedience,
Lover of evangelical poverty,
Most affectionately devout,
Most zealous observer of Rule,
Most desirous of the salvation of souls,
Perpetual adorer of the Eucharist,
Particular client of St. Ignatius,

} Pray for us.

Be merciful unto us, O Lord.

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

From the concupiscence of the eyes,
From the concupiscence of the flesh,
From the pride of life,
By the merits and intercession of St. Aloysius,
By his angelical purity,
By his sanctity and glory,
} Deliver us, O Lord.

We sinners, we beseech thee to hear us.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world
Graciously spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
Hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father, etc. Amen.

V. Pray for us, St. Aloysius.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY.

O God, the distributor of heavenly gifts, who didst join in the angelic youth, Aloysius, wonderful innocence of life with an equal severity of penance; grant, through his merits and prayers, that we, who have not followed the example of his innocence, may imitate his practice of penance. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE STUDENTS' PRAYER

TO ST. ALOYSIUS.

ANGELIC youth, Aloysius, by the particular appointment of God's vicar upon earth, patron of students! thou who hast illustrated the church by a holy contempt of an earthly principality, but more by thy innocence, the sanctity of thy life, and the glory of thy miracles! allow me from this day to choose and adopt thee patron and protector of my life and studies, firmly resolved to follow the example and pattern, as well of piety as of industry, thou hast placed before me. For the love thou hast for Jesus Crucified, and His most blessed Mother, receive me as thy client and obedient servant; aid and assist me in the pursuit of virtue and learning; nourish and increase in me purity

of body and mind; turn away the snares laid against my chastity; ward and defend me from the dangers of the world; inspire my heart with a true and filial confidence in the ever blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of good counsel; govern and direct me in my choice of a state of life, and let the grace of God be my perpetual defence against all mortal sin; that as thou always didst live in purity and integrity truly angelical, so, assisted by thy patronage, and aided by the grace of God, I may live in purity and holiness in this world, and deserve to be associated with thee and united to the company of angels in heaven. Amen.

HYMN TO ST. ALOYSIUS.

ANGELIC youth! bright heaven's treasure,
And a joy to those below,
Be our model in our life-time,
Be our guard against the foe.

Though to all so dear, beloved,
Who to you for comfort fly,
Yet to us your brother students
You are bound by closer tie.

Like a lily in its whiteness,
Gentle, pure, and oh! so fair;
Yet you lived through all your life-time
In rude penance and in prayer.

How the world gleamed bright before you,
High and royal prize at stake,
Yet you put aside the tempter,
And you fought for Jesus' sake.

In the way of truth and virtue
You have shown the royal road,
While you tell us who the King is,
And you point to His abode.

Oh, how just you were and faithful
To your God and fellow-men;
May we also in the battle
Be as brave as you have been.

REMEMBRANCES.

DEAR, dead memories, these of years agone,
'Till by Death's hand, or Time's or Duty's call,
Away we shall be summoned, one by one,
Until the silent tomb shall gather all.

Yet, through these years, until we meet again,
These college days will live a fragrant past;
Yea! and when heart-sick, reaching joy through pain,
Backward,—regretful,—will our thoughts be cast.

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